NME
13 JUNE 2015

50 Greatest Summer Anthems

As chosen by
Florence Welch
Dave Grohl
Brandon Flowers
Madonna
The Black Keys
Rage Against The Machine
Carl Barât
Lemmy
And loads more

Glasto countdown

First pictures from this year's site

Foals

Yannis on their "intense" new album

+

Richard Ayoade meets J Mascis

+

Du Blonde
A$AP Rocky
The Strokes
Mike Skinner
FFS

Wolf Alice ...in wonderland

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"Look after the senses and the sounds will look after themselves" LEWIS CARROLL

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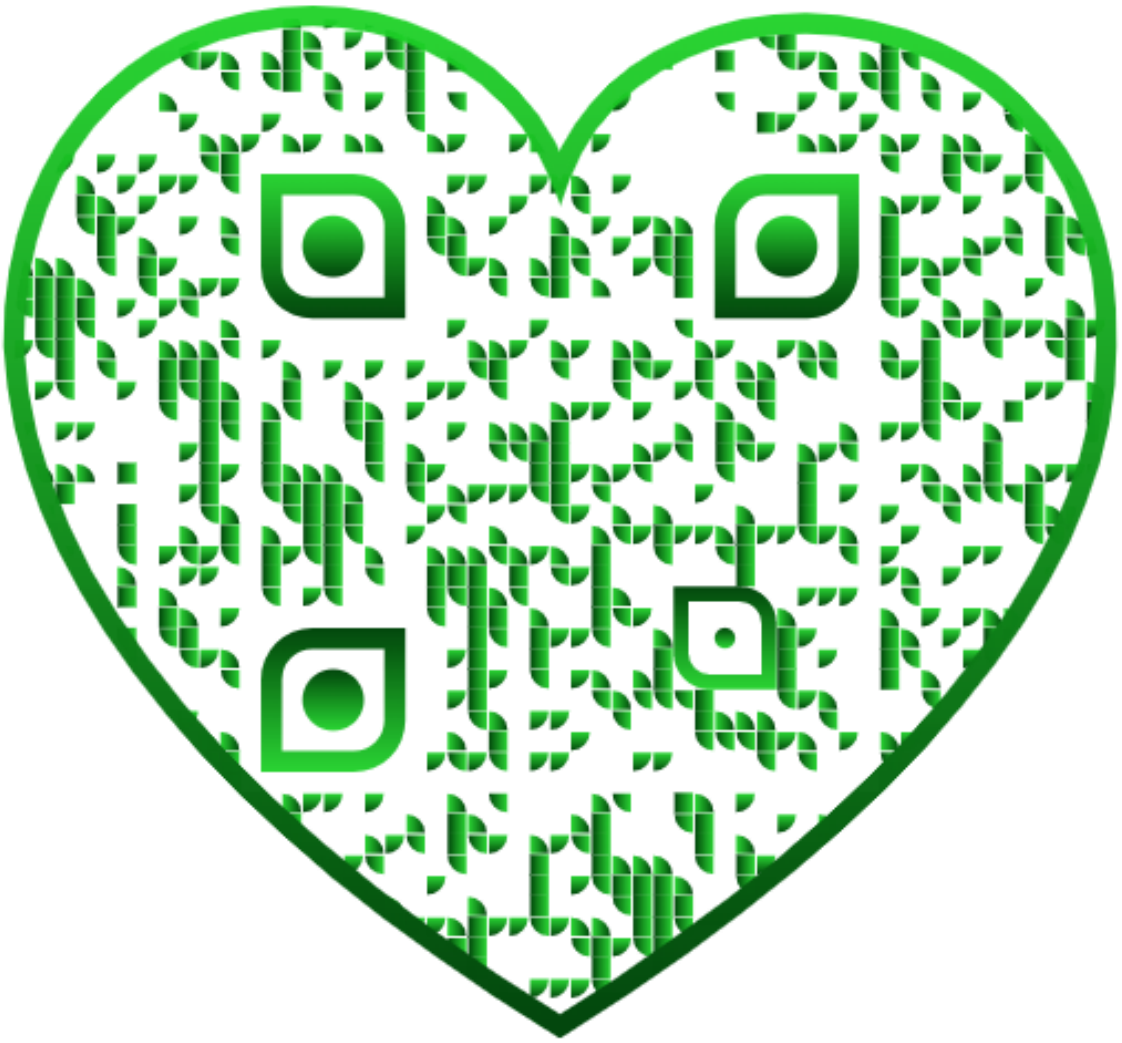

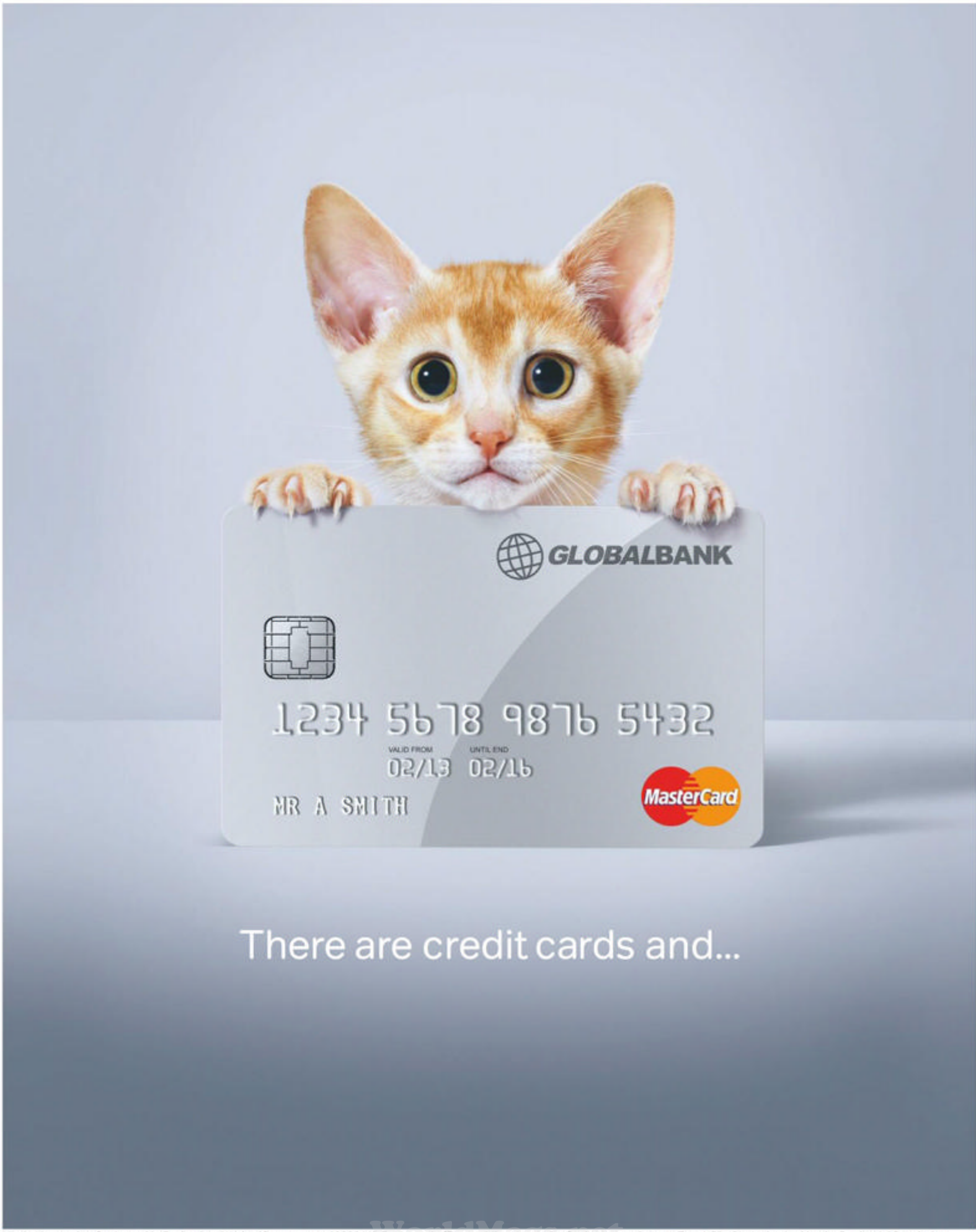

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INSIDE NME

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS | 13 JUNE 2015

REGULARS

5 SOUNDING OFF

6 ON REPEAT

14 IN THE STUDIO

Foals

18 SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Ryan Jarman, The Cribs

20 RADAR

Meet Britpop revivalists DMA's, plus 19 other new artists

40 REVIEWS

▶ ALBUMS

A$AP Rocky – 'At.Long.Last.A$AP'

Hudson Mohawke – 'Lantern'

FFS – 'FFS'

and more

▶ FILM

Entourage

and more

▶ LIVE

Primavera Sound

Fleetwood Mac

Babes In Toyland

and more

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FEATURES

24 Wolf Alice

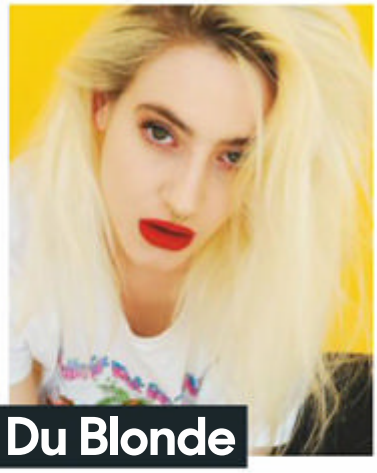
On the eve of releasing their debut album, Wolf Alice retread their long road to stardom, with all its growing pains, self-discovery and *Simpsons* references. Just don't call them a grunge band...

30 The 50 Ultimate Summer Anthems

The sun is adjusting its headwear, so Radiohead, The Libertines, Foo Fighters, Florence, The Strokes and many more select their favourite BBQ-friendly hits

34 Ayoade Vs Mascis

One barely utters a word, the other deconstructs the interview process live on *Channel 4 News* – J Mascis meets Richard Ayoade and, amazingly, sparks fly



38 Du Blonde

The artist formerly known as Beth Jeans Houghton tells *NME* how near-death experiences and videos of monkeys masturbating frogs prompted one of pop's most incredible transformations

BAND LIST

Active Child	43	Jungle	30, 48
Albert Hammond Jr	7	<KAEB	6
A$AP Rocky	40	Kevin Morby	48
Babes In Toyland	49	The Killers	10
The Bad Years	21	Kita	22
Battles	51	LCD Soundsystem	32
Bells Atlas	23	Leon Bridges	7, 41
The Black Keys	31, 48	The Libertines	10, 31
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club	45	L7	11
Brandon Flowers	33	Lucy Rose	6
Caribou	49	The Maccabees	11, 33
Circa Waves	11, 31	Madonna	33
DBFC	23	Mac DeMarco	48
Death Cab For Cutie	33	Maximo Park	31
Death From Above 1979	10	Meg Baird	42
Deaths	21	The Membranes	42
Desaparecidos	43	Metric	7
Diiv	48	Michael Rault	42
Dinosaur Jr	34	Mike Skinner	12, 31
Django Django	6	Mogwai	32
DJ Coco	49	Motörhead	31
DJ Locksmith	32	Omar Souleyman	7
DMA's	20	Oscar	43
Doldrums	49	The Orb	41
Dornik	22	Ought	48
Drinks	6	Outblinker	21
Du Blonde	33, 38	Palma Violets	32
Eastern Barbers	21	Paul McCartney	50
Elohim	22	Patti Smith	48
Eminem	6	Peace	11, 30
Enter Shikari	32	Perfume Genius	48
The Fall	32	Piano Wire	22
Fall Out Boy	33	Pixies	7
Family Friends	22	Public Enemy	15, 31
Father John Misty	33	Radiohead	30
Favela	21	Radkey	6
Fehm	21	Rage Against The Machine	31
FFS	32, 43	Rat Boy	6, 31
Field Studies	22	The Replacements	51
Fist City	41	Ride	32
The Flaming Lips	33	Royal Headache	7
Fleetwood Mac	49	Röyksopp	31
Flo Morrissey	21	Run The Jewels	31, 48
Florence + The Machine	30	Safe To Swim	21
Foals	14, 33	Shabazz Palaces	48
Foo Fighters	33	Sleaford Mods	7, 31, 47
Frances	23	Son Lux	42
Frankie & The Heartstrings	32	Stephen Fretwell	15
Frank Turner	32	Stephen Malkmus	31
Gambles	21	Stornoway	31
Ghostpoet	33	The Strokes	10, 49
Goat	31	The Strypes	7
Guns	23	Sundara Karma	6
Gwenno	6	Super Furry Animals	32
Gwilym Gold	41	Swim Deep	33
Happy Mondays	30, 33	Thee Oh Sees	49
Hodgy Beats	7	The Thurston Moore Band	32, 48
Hudson Mohawke	42	Titus Andronicus	7
Hurts	12	Tobias Jesso Jr	48
Interpol	31	The Vaccines	11
Jaako Eino Kalevi	43	The Who	16
James Blake	48	Wolf Alice	6, 24, 33
Jon Hopkins	48	Yeah Yeah Yeahs	32
		Young Fathers	31, 51

COVER: DEAN CHALKEY CONTENTS: SOPHIE HARRIS TAYLOR

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SOUNDING OFF

TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

Answering you this week: Ben Homewood

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

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STRANGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

Really enjoyed the insights into Florence Welch's life from last week's cover story (June 6), but while it's reassuring to know that she lives in a house full of curios, books and nick-nacks, as I'd always imagined, it's often strange to read about how essentially normal pop stars like Florence are behind-the-scenes. It's impossible to ever imagine David Bowie sitting around with a Pot Noodle watching *Newsnight* in his pants, but Florence is quite open about running around London in a parka and living with her mum until she's 28. Heaven knows I wouldn't want her to be summoning tree sprites in Epping Forest all the time, but it does deflate the fantasy and illusion a little bit to know it's mostly an act.
Caroline Gardener, via email

BH: Glad you enjoyed the piece, Caroline, but I disagree about Flo's weirdness being an act. I think Florence *is* actually a bit of a freak. The first time I saw her play, she was shrieking away with a punk band called Ludes (where are *they* now?) on the bottom deck of a boat on the Thames, wearing a billowing nightdress. Her hair was straggly and her feet were gnarled and blackened, like an extra from *Oliver Twist*. And that crazy, brain-frying voice – there's no way someone normal could sing like that, is there?

A LONELY BOTTLEWOMAN WRITES

I'm a 14-year-old-girl-from Newcastle and my music taste isn't exactly from this century. My main idols are The Kinks, The Who and Bowie, although I have a soft spot for Arctic Monkeys and Catfish And The Bottlemen (I enjoyed Van's recent interview, by the way). I'm writing because most concerts are either very scarce, expensive, far away or horrifically mainstream. It's annoying because hardly anyone in my year has heard of The Kinks (horrifying, I know) and they're all into bands I can't bear. I know I should 'open my mind' to new music, but can you really listen to something as over-played as Ed Sheeran? Do you have any ideas as to how I can meet like-minded people in a similar age group using limited funds?
Francesca Cockell, via email

BH: First off, you *do not* have to listen to Ed Sheeran! Turn to our *Radar* section and feast your eyes on this week's batch of new bands – the sort of acts who play cheap, nearby and often. Find a dozen or so you like, make yourself known on their social media pages and you'll soon know loads of people going to the same gigs as you. The Cluny venues in Newcastle are a great place to start for up-and-comers.

IS JACK ALL WHITE?

I feel a bit sorry for Jack White. In his recent interview about cutting back on live shows he sounded a bit defeated, like he's giving up on his amazing talent. And the fact there's little hope of him and Meg getting The White Stripes back together makes it worse. Music always changes and evolves, but there's a need for old-fashioned mavericks like White to exist. And having seen his solo show live, I can vouch he didn't give the impression of an artist who didn't want to do it. I hope he doesn't become a recluse. And if he could convince Meg to pick up the drumsticks once again, that would be unbelievable.
Alex Renton, via email

BH: Sadly, you're probably right about Meg, but can you really imagine Jacky boy becoming a recluse? I can't. He loves being Jack White too much. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if he's planning on his next gigs taking place down a drill-hole deep into the earth's sedimentary layer, giving fans the chance to see where the first traceable piece of vinyl was moulded from the melted teeth of prehistoric bats millions of years ago. That would be *classic* Jack.

ZACKERY MICHAEL, GETTY

ABSENT PRESENTERS

Zane Lowe, Fearne Cotton and David Letterman: all gone within a short space of time. As three of the most prolific presenters for championing new music have left their positions, it leaves music fans in limbo. All we can really do is wait and hope that whoever takes over will continue to provide such memorable performers.
Liam Hall, via email

BH: I hear you, pal. David Letterman is a big loss, and not only because he let Fat White Family loose in a TV studio back in March. But don't worry, there are plenty of US shows – Jimmy Kimmel's included – that host great bands. As for us Brits, we're in good hands with Annie Mac, but our TV chat programmers could do with taking a leaf out of Letterman's book. Less Clean Bandit, more Sleaford Mods.

75-ALIVE

Damn you, The 1975! You delete all of your social media to make us hope and dream you might be packing it in and then – BLAM! – you hit us with a brand new 'identity' and what looks like a new sodding album. It's like David Cameron dissolving his cabinet, waiting 10 minutes for you to start celebrating and then marching back into Number 10 in full Nazi regalia.
Tom Murdoch, via email

BH: I actually thought The 1975's stunt was pretty funny, particularly the bit where frontman Matt Healy tweeted the question, "Our projected identity must change not only visually but philosophically – how do you do that?" Just imagine, they might even come back as a decent band...

LOOK WHO'S STALKING

"I can't believe I met Queens Of The Stone Age's Josh Homme!"
Mathilde Courjeau, via email

ON REPEAT

NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Albert Hammond Jr
Losing Touch

Albert Hammond Jr describes his third solo album as "a love letter to my past self", and it's not hard to link latest cut 'Losing Touch' with his tales of drug excess. "*Pop your confusion into my arm/Left with a contusion and a vein full of scars*", he sings over muted guitars. After that, a high-pitched, fuzzed-up melody needles through, bringing this impassioned break from the past into furious life.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

2. Wolf Alice
Lisbon

"*You're going to look at me twice, it's eventual/ You're there when you're not 'cos I'm smoking your menthols*", Ellie Rowsell sings to an unnamed "*stone-cold fox*" as her band get seductive on us. Balancing their sugary melodies and heavier tendencies, 'Lisbon' hits on the pop-grunge sweet spot that Wolf Alice nail so well as Rowsell sings "*My arms are here*". Only a curmudgeon would deny Wolf Alice their embrace.

David Renshaw, Acting Deputy News Editor

3. Gwenno
Fratolish Hiang Perpeshki

As anybody who grew up during the social media age knows, it's near-impossible to erase past incarnations of your publicised self. Gwenno Saunders, once of The Pipettes, has sought to combat this the right way. Rather than a complete reinvention, 'Fratolish Hiang Perpeshki' combines the jaunty synths of her dormant outfit with pastoral flourishes reminiscent of fellow Welsh luminaries Cate Le Bon and Gruff Rhys.

Luke Morgan Britton, writer

4. <KAEB
When We Fall

It should be laughably gimmicky: BEAK>, the Bristol trio led by ex-Portishead man Geoff Barrow, are releasing a split EP with – wait for it – themselves. But <KAEB, as their alter ego is known, is no mere marketing stunt, and 'When We Fall' feels like it's been made by the same musicians but in some bizarre alternate reality, with its walking-through-water strum, its lilting strings and off-kilter vocals. Sometimes, going backwards is no bad thing.

Ben Hewitt, writer

5. Rat Boy
Left 4 Dead

Like his heroes The Libertines and Blur, Jordan Cardy is fixated with a very British kind of social observation. 'Left 4 Dead', the B-side to debut single 'Sign On', takes a darker turn than his usual tales of Booze Britain, though, narrating a mugging. "*Left him for dead/That's what the papers said*", Cardy calls over howling backing vocals, urgently chugging guitars and a sample that recalls Dr Dre's 'Still Dre'.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

6. Royal Headache
High

One of this decade's great 'lost' Aussie bands, Royal Headache's absence from mainstream music since 2011's debut album has been hard to stomach. But after a surprise performance at Sydney Opera House last month, comes this – the first track from soon-to-be released second album 'High'. It's a frighteningly tantalising return to form, all Kinks power chords and soulboy vocals from Shogun.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

7. Eminem
Phenomenal

'Phenomenal' is the first song to be released from *Southpaw*, an upcoming boxing film starring Jake Gyllenhaal as bloodied fighter Billy Hope. Eminem was originally asked to play the boxer, but opted instead to executive produce the soundtrack. His decision allowed for 'Phenomenal', a DJ Khalil-produced thumper that has him rapping about converting doubt to gunpowder ("*I'll show you how to use doubt as fuel/Convert it to gunpowder, too*").

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

8. Sundara Karma
Flame

"*Hold my flame and set alight/Hold my fire screaming inside*", gasps Oscar Pollock on this new single from Reading tropical pop renegades Sundara Karma. It's their biggest singalong moment yet, and resistance is futile. It's built around a red-hot combo of thumping drums and spiky guitars, but the restrained verses and suspenseful build-ups that ramp up tension before the explosive chorus are even better.

James Bentley, writer

9. Lucy Rose
Like An Arrow

There's a persistent beat pulsing through 'Like An Arrow' that marks a subtle shift in direction for Lucy Rose. The Warwickshire singer's March tour saw her leave her stool at home and embrace a full band set-up, and this new single explores territory beyond her voice and guitar. That beat is reminiscent of The xx, while Rose's guitar twangs gently over layered keys and a typically sweet lyrical message, "*I will comfort you/I'm in love with you*".

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

10. Drinks
Hermits On Holiday

When Brit singer-songwriters move to California it usually heralds a smoothening of their sound, a softening of the consonants, an inevitable Laurel Canyon-isation. But not Cate Le Bon. Instead, she's hooked up with San Fran garage rocker Tim Presley (of White Fence) and embraced the last vestiges of Haight-Ashbury lo-fi psych weirdness. The playful title track of their upcoming collaborative album comes on like an audio guide for eloping misfits.

Sam Richards, writer

JORDAN GREEN, DANIEL ALEXANDER HARRIS, ANDY HUGHES, GUY EPPEL

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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11. Radkey
Dark Black Makeup

Last year, Isaiah Radke revealed to *NME* his intention to "thoroughly rock your dick off" with his band's album. It sounded plausible at the time and now feels inevitable. The title track is a belter, bounding along on a romping riff, with Dee's rich vocals making them sound like a Fred Macpherson-fronted Drenge. He's got it in for "*kids these days*" wasting their lives, but this'll rock them into action.
Matthew Horton, writer

12. Hodgy Beats
NOHOOK

Hodgy Beats might not get the props of fellow Odd Future cohorts Tyler, The Creator or Earl Sweatshirt, but as half of offshoot duo MellowHype he's always been among the collective's brightest sparks. 'NOHOOK' shows he's still blazing, in both senses: his animated, cartoonish flow streams like caramel over a stoned-Sunday beat. "*Either love me or go to hell*", he spits midway in. Easy decision.
Jazz Monroe, writer

13. Django Django
Slow West

'Born Under Saturn' is barely a month old, but already we've got more new music from Django Django. 'Slow West', posted online this week, is no retread of that recent album's spacey indie-pop hysteria, however, instead setting field recordings of galloping horses to an acoustic guitar drone. Until now, quirky vocal harmonies have been Django's calling card. On this instrumental, though, they spellbind in a much more stripped-down manner.
Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

14. Leon Bridges
Smooth Sailin'

Before Leon Bridges first picked up a guitar four years ago, he planned to become a professional choreographer. No surprise then that his music contains such swagger. Like his previous three singles, 'Smooth Sailin" is a tune so groovy it practically saunters down the street in denim hot pants with a chilled Dr Pepper in hand. Sure, it's familiar soul R&B, a sound done so many times before, but the Texan makes it so refreshing.
Greg Cochrane, Editor, NME.COM

15. Pixies
Um Chagga Lagga

Last year's 'Indie Cindy' was the Pixies' first album in 13 years, but it doesn't seem like the wait for more new material will be too long this time round. The Boston quartet have been playing 'Um Chagga Lagga' of late, and performed it in a recent stripped-back session for *Rolling Stone*. Black Francis half-sings lyrics about what happens at "*truck stops and gas stations and cornfields*" in France, over noodling guitars and a bluesy bassline.
Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

16. Titus Andronicus
Fatal Flaw

Comprising a whopping 29 separate pieces of music, 'The Most Lamentable Tragedy' is the forthcoming fourth album from New Jersey heartland punks Titus Andronicus. A five-act rock opera, two-thirds of the way in, the ambitious epic offers up the chugging, brilliant 'Fatal Flaw', which stitches together the raggedness of prime-era Rancid with squealing Thin Lizzy guitars.
Leonie Cooper, writer

17. The Strypes
Get Into It

What the Cavan quartet did after their 2013 debut album 'Snapshot' was always going to be their biggest test. Following last month's 'Flat Out' single, 'Get Into It' is the first track from July's second album 'Little Victories'. It finds Ross Farrelly and Josh McClorey singing about a dangerous woman "*who uses tight seduction to lead the conversation*" over a pulsating bassline and a guitar far beefier than their youthful blues of old.
Andy Welch, writer

18. Sleaford Mods
Face To Faces

You can hear the spittle at the corners of Jason Williamson's mouth on 'Face To Faces', this raging new single from upcoming third Sleaford Mods album 'Key Markets'. Brittle drums and a rigid bassline from Andrew Fearn are typically minimal, making space for impassioned couplets from Williamson. Here's one of the best: "*Everyone spits at ya/Even your wife/No skunk/I need to be pissed up to smoke that shit, you cunt*".
Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

19. Omar Souleyman
Bahdeni Nami

Syria's breakout star first teamed up with London producer Four Tet on 2013's 'Wenu Wenu' – a first album proper for Omar Souleyman – and they're back together on this title track from the singer's new album, 'Bahdeni Nami' (out in July). It's a whopper at eight minutes, and is inevitably cleaner sounding than the raw, clanging songs that first drew western ears to this celebrated wedding singer.
Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

20. Metric
Cascades

Grand masters of the electro-rock show-stopper, Canada's Metric go full-on future disco (don't they all, Stealing Sheep?) on this sixth album primer, right down to uploading singer Emily Haines' entire being to their iPad's DaftPunkify app and reprogramming her into an android-voiced, self-harmonising alt-pop robot. More evidence that the machines are becoming all-conquering, but at least this indie AI just wants to make the world dance.
Mark Beaumont, writer

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Pyramid scheme

Ahead of Glastonbury 2015, Emily Eavis gives *NME* a tour of the site, from the revamped Other Stage to its brand-new Temple

The Pyramid Stage dominates the Glastonbury site as the 2015 festival approaches

There's only a few weeks until the gates open for another Glastonbury festival and it's all go on Worthy Farm. As co-organiser Emily Eavis (pictured left) careers around the site in a Land Rover, *NME* passes person after person in high-vis jacket and hard hat, pulling together the framework for stages that will host this year's soon-to-be-classic performances.

The Pyramid Stage is the most complete, standing tall in all its triangular glory, surrounded by furrows of dirt and long blue cables. Behind it, the Other Stage presents the first of 2015's changes – a new rectangular roof replaces the old dome-shaped one and it hangs metres from the stage, waiting to be raised. "There's going to be an installation on the Other Stage this year by Joe Rush, the guy who did the phoenix on the Pyramid," Emily tells us, waving to the crew as we drive by.

We find the artist Rush by the Bandstand, stood among a cluster of old fridges and freezers. A part of Glastonbury legend, he's been working with the festival since the mid-1980s. When the likes of The Vaccines and Jamie T play on the Other Stage, they'll be surrounded by "loads of horns", he says, while the mound of white goods he's amongst will be topped by a "big polar bear, looking down, all lost".

Right at the top of The Park field – beyond the Ribbon Tower, which stands ribbon-less on our visit, and where the Hollywood sign-style Glastonbury letters sit – will be another entirely new area created for this year's event. The Temple is a wooden construct that's based around three pyramids of old telegraph poles and offers one of the most breathtaking views of the entire site. "We're going to have lanterns up here that people can light and hang up, so by Sunday it'll just be full of lights," Emily says. "It'd be good to bring someone like Kanye up here, actually, to give them the full context of the festival." ■ RHIAN DALY

DAN KENDALL

The boys are back in town

Ahead of The Strokes' return to London, we spoke to Albert Hammond Jr and quizzed the band's famous fans

The Strokes' most recent UK gig – at Dingwalls, London on June 9, 2010, playing under the alias 'Venison'

Its been five long years since The Strokes, undoubtedly the most influential guitar band of the millennium, last played London. Making up for all that lost time, they'll soon be heading up Barclaycard Presents British Summer Time at Hyde Park on Thursday, June 18. *NME* spoke to some of music's biggest names about the impact the New York City gang had on them, as well as talking to Albert Hammond Jr about what The Strokes have in store for one of the most eagerly anticipated shows of the year.

Brandon Flowers
The Killers

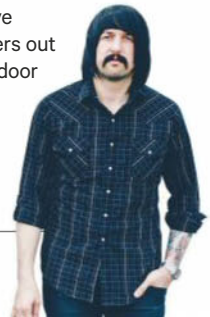
"I think there's a lot of boxes that The Strokes tick. The things that you want in a band. They have such a strong identity, a great frontman, great songs... I mean, they look better than you. It's like they've got everything that you want. I was extremely jealous when I first heard them! I was just starting with Dave [Keuning], and me and Dave actually bought the first record together and listened to it together. I didn't think they were going to top what I heard on ['The Modern Age' EP]... and I was just floored. I mean, I was depressed for months. I was obsessed about it. And I knew it gave me something to strive for and it made me want to be better, so I'm grateful for it. But it was a tough time for me!"

Carl Barât
The Libertines

"We always loved The Strokes – I'm not sure if they ever liked us! Actually, we did get on with Albert [Hammond Jr] and Nikolai [Fraiture]. We always thought they didn't like us, anyway. I remember Pete was really into 'Is This It' but I was really annoyed because I thought they were trying too hard to sound like Lou Reed and The Velvet Underground. They also wore the same kind of clothes as us and were coming over to England and killing it, doing what we'd been trying to do for years, so I was a bit resentful! We jumped a train to Liverpool – pretending we were The Moldy Peaches, like the ticket conductor was going to give a fuck! We were saying we had to go and support The Strokes. We got to their gig at the Lomax and didn't have any money. Pete got kicked out for trying to nick a guitar pedal. Then afterwards we got The Strokes to all buy us fish and chips and lend us some money. Maybe that's why they didn't like us after that. That was the summer of 'Is This It'. That was definitely a game changer."

Jesse F Keeler
Death From Above 1979

"The last two shows Death From Above played were both festivals – one in Atlanta, one in Florida, and each day The Strokes were the headliner. Sebastian [Grainger] is friends with Albert, so they invited us to come watch them on the side of the stage, two days in a row. I think they played 'Reptilia' first. As soon as they started, it all hit me like a ton of bricks – like, 'Oh my God, this band opened the door for so many bands that would not have happened.' Before The Strokes there was so much influence of grunge and this loud/quiet thing. You'd even hear it in Weezer and things like that. But then came The Strokes, who are influenced from an earlier, sort of forgotten thing, like Television, like this '70s New York punk thing. For whatever reason, there's a sound that they had that had existed before but everyone had neglected it. And now there's a million bands that have managed to make careers out of walking through the door that they kicked open. I felt like I was watching Guns N' Roses play or something, but from my generation."



INTERVIEWS: MARK BEAUMONT, GARY RYAN, KEVIN EG PERRY

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Hugo White

The Maccabees

"For me, they were incredibly important in terms of the way that the arrangement and simplicity of the songs was so well crafted, especially on the earlier stuff. The Strokes were one of the bands that we'd go and watch and you couldn't really get better than them. So I think it did have an influence on us, 'cos they were a unit as well. It had that thing that The Clash had initially. You'd watch stuff by The Clash and there was this team mentality; it was a gang of people doing it with the same reasons."

Justin Young

The Vaccines

"I think so much of music's importance, and why it's important when it's important, is because of the context. I think they came around at a time when music needed excitement again, it needed a shake-up. But it wasn't just that – 'Is This It' was perfect. I think that's one of the few records in the last 15 years that's a 10-out-of-10 record. I was 11 or 12 when I first got into them, so I remember I had the record but I didn't understand its significance – I just quite liked it. It was only four years ago, maybe, that I looked back and realised how perfect that record was, and how important it was as well."

Harry Koisser

Peace

"Everyone who was in the five years immediately above me in school was massively into The Strokes, which then meant that I was into The Strokes. They were very popular and their music had an impact on every other band around me growing up. Not a massively direct influence, but actually I think Julian's melodies are the one thing that is in every band since – you can always hear the Strokes-iness in every genre you hear. It's something that's been passed on quite subtly; I hear it all over the place, it's post-Strokes. I hear it in my own music as well. It's in your head whether you want it to be or whether you don't want it to be."

Kieran Shudall

Circa Waves

"I think what I took from The Strokes was the attention to detail that they bring to their records. It's not just like, 'Let the producer do it.' Julian Casablancas' vision from the start was to create this whole look and this sound and these incredible pop songs. I'm desperate to see them live – I've always wanted to. I was too young to go to the shows when 'Is This It' was out, so I've never had the chance to. Over time, I've studied The Libertines and The Strokes and tried to figure out why they're so good and why there's this purely visceral adoration of these incredible bands. And it was so simple – there was no looking deeply into what they were doing, it's just like, 'These bands are fucking cool.'"

Albert Hammond Jr

How are the band feeling ahead of the Hyde Park show?
Albert: "We're playing amazingly, so I feel very excited to be playing it. I was a little nervous at first when we booked it, but now that it's getting closer I feel really excited."

What was it that made the band want to play this gig in particular?
"We haven't played London in forever. It almost felt like if we don't do it now maybe we'll never do it. It could be our last show, you never know."

What makes you say it could be your last show?
"I don't know, it always feels as though it could be the last show."

Would you like to come back to the UK and tour?
"I'd like to tour so we could play more places and do our own shows. Even though they [festival dates] are our own shows, it feels stressful because it's so big."

Do you find, as the band gets older, the songs from the beginning of your career take on different meaning?
"Yeah, I find that that's kinda why you don't play things sometimes, and then when you bring a song back it can have a different meaning. Sometimes those songs get beaten to death, not for the fans so much but for you onstage. That's fine, though, that's part of entertaining. All life is a compromise."
■ DAVID RENSHAW

THE MINI INTERVIEW

Donita Sparks

L7

L7 are playing their first shows in 15 years – why did you stop?
"The band was broke. We had no management, no record label. I had worded it as a hiatus because I had told myself if the band ever breaks up I will never do a reunion, ever. So I wanted to keep it open-ended."

What made you want to get the band back together?
"We realised that there was a demand on our Facebook page and we were being interviewed for an L7 documentary. Then I get a call out of the blue from my booking agent saying, 'Hey, would you like me to book you some festivals?' I was like, 'I don't know, I haven't spoken to those guys in, like, 15 years!'"

What's in store for Download Festival and your UK gigs this month?
"We're not playing an album in full, but it's heavy on 'Bricks Are Heavy' because that was our biggest record."

How long has the documentary been in the making?
"A director has been on board for about a year and a half, but I've been digitising stuff for the last three or four years. We've got really great footage and I was like, 'I don't want this collecting dust in my closet.' We also have entire shows of Nirvana that we shot ourselves and entire sets of Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds." ■ LEONIE COOPER

TOM OXLEY, ED MILES, JORDAN HUGHES, CORBIS

Worldmags.net

Do the Tonga

The Streets may be over, but Mike Skinner is busier than ever, readying an album for his club night, Tonga, making films and remixing Slaves

You've been in the studio with Dave from Manchester arts collective Murkage. What are you working on?
"Processing a load of stuff that we've done at lots of different studios for this 'Tonga' album, which is the club night we do. We're featuring all of the wonderful people that have come down to the club and partied with us. It's me and Dave, really, and then other Murkage guys like Gaika. The formula is very rap and R&B. It's quite American in the way we've put it together, but it's mainly the northern/Sheffield bass sound – kind of garage on speed, which is what speed-garage was, but this is even more speedy."

Are you going to rap on it?
"No, but I might sing on it. We're into that Auto-Tuned sound – it suits the vibe."

You were at The Great Escape in May premiering your documentary, *Hip Hop In The Holy Land*. Were you interested in Israeli/Palestinian rap beforehand?
"I've always had an interest in domestic hip-hop, because that's what I've always been. So whenever I go anywhere, I'm interested in finding out how local rap scenes work. Sometimes, like in France, the domestic scene is as big as the American import stuff. The film combined my interest in domestic hip-hop scenes and history – world history – and you don't get more 'world history' than Israel."

"It is nice to be sort of famous and have people tell you how great you are"

You've been doing remix work, including Slaves' 'Cheer Up London' with London rapper Jammer. You've become a proper jack of all trades...
"For me, nothing has changed, really – it all comes out of the same thing. In order to do The Streets, I was into production, story and performing. I still have all those elements, but I got rid of The Streets. I still do the jumping on people's heads off the stage, but at Tonga now. I still do the storytelling, which is the documentary stuff; and I still do production, which is the remixes. My life hasn't really changed; it just looks like it has."

By getting rid of The Streets, you now work more under the radar. Are you happy about that?
"It's easier. I mean, it is nice to be sort of famous and have people tell you how great you are, but it's also nice to be able to go out and not have to speak to anyone."

On your Tumblr, you paid a fair bit of attention to the election and said you were going to vote Labour...
"Yes, but I don't believe in blindly supporting a team, because I don't think that's very intelligent. For instance, I thought we needed to probably not keep spending when Gordon Brown was saying we should, so I voted Conservative at that point."

You also recently expressed support for Chuka Umunna to become Labour leader before he pulled out of the race.
"Ha, yeah – a former garage DJ. He's been shut down, hasn't he?"

What's the current situation with your label, The Beats, and will the Tonga album be coming out on it?
"The Beats isn't happening at the moment. But I do have a thing called Mike Skinner, which is rather imaginative, so I'll be putting it out on that." ■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Theo Hutchcraft

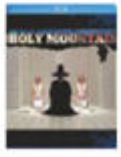
Hurts

BOOK
The Master And Margarita by Mikhail Bulgakov

"I tend to get given this a lot, so I've got about 12 copies now. It's about the devil and Moscow and there's an element of fantasy and an elegance to it."

DVD BOXSET
Carl Sagan's Cosmos
"He was a physics lecturer and he made a series in 1980 called *Cosmos* – Vangelis did the soundtrack. He speaks in an amazing, artistic way, though he's talking about science."

FILM
The Holy Mountain



"It's one of my favourite ever films and it's a film I can watch a lot of times and I always find something new."

GAME
Catching food in your mouth
"I've been able to practise a lot over the nine years that Adam (Anderson, bandmate) and I have known each other and I reckon I can get one from about 10 metres now. I don't know if that's a game, though. It's very serious."

HOME COMFORT
Nothing

"I don't really like having stuff or carrying stuff. I try and pack as little as possible. I don't really ever have the desire for home. I'm a lone wolf."

▶ **Hurts play London Scala on June 16**

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Foals at La Fabrique studios in France, February 2015

Foals

In the south of France, the quartet are tapping into their frontman's "inner madman" to create album four

"Van Gogh cut his ear off in the next town and was put in a psychiatric ward in the same village we recorded in, so we wanted to suck in a bit of that madness," says Foals frontman Yannis Philippakis, speaking of the Provence location where the band's forthcoming fourth album, produced by James Ford (Arctic Monkeys, Florence + The Machine) was recorded. But if a certain historic insanity pervades the air of France's La Fabrique studios, then Van Gogh isn't the only one to blame for the extremes that form the as-yet-untitled record, due for release later this year.

Volatile creativity, it seems, sits at its crux. The record was initially written in the band's cramped Oxford studio at the tail end of 2014 in a flurry of productivity, with sessions starting barely a month after their triumphant Bestival headline show. "The taps were just on," says Philippakis. "It was the opposite of when you hear some bands saying, 'Oh, we needed a break from each other,' or 'We needed to go and rejuvenate.' I was chomping at the bit to get going." The material that emerged from those sessions dug further into Philippakis' psyche than ever before. Citing the twisted yelps of Pixies singer Frank Black as a lyrical inspiration ("When you look at a Pixies song, it's all over the place and it's just him barking out of his consciousness") and influenced by the jarring personal changes of "moving to London and staring down the barrel of the big 3-0", Philippakis aimed to peel back the band's trademark cryptic lyrical layers even further. "On [2013's 'Holy Fire'] I tried to consciously push the lyrics somewhere personal that was more like real life, whereas on this one I just wanted to strip the layers of myself away, have the reptilian part of my brain speak directly and not analyse or censor it," he says. "I wanted to tap into my inner madman and feel like I was channelling some sort of fevered creature. I wanted to relish the mania, and what ended up happening – looking back at certain passages in some songs – is pretty intense in a way that I wouldn't have ever been able to plan."

"I WANTED TO FEEL LIKE I WAS CHANNELLING SOME SORT OF FEVERED CREATURE. I WANTED TO RELISH THE MANIA"
YANNIS PHILIPPAKIS

How intense? Take 'What Went Down', a thunderstorm of a track that strips back Foals' trademark intricacies into a direct blast of riffs and screams that's unequivocally their heaviest offering to date. "It's the closest to a representation of how we play live," Philippakis says. Meanwhile, the other track *NME* hears, 'Mountain At My Gate', takes the groove of 'Miami' or 'My Number' and beefs it up tenfold, building into a cacophonous climax that could somehow still fit on a dancefloor. "The extremes are further apart than anything we've done before," says Philippakis. "There are some dirtier tracks, while 'Give It All' is up there with the most beautiful things we've ever written. We've realised we just sound like us, so it's good to have courage and push ourselves further out, otherwise it will just sound like self-parody."

For now, Foals have a few European festival commitments where they may potentially debut new tracks, but after that it's full steam ahead. "This new stuff's going to decimate venues; we're itching to play it," Philippakis grins. "It's going to be fun to get back on stage and obliterate places." ■ LISA WRIGHT

▶ THE DETAILS

- ▶ **TITLE** TBC
- ▶ **RELEASE DATE** TBC
- ▶ **LABEL** Warners
- ▶ **RECORDED** La Fabrique studios, Provence
- ▶ **PRODUCER** James Ford
- ▶ **TRACKS INCLUDE** 'What Went Down', 'Mountain At My Gate', 'Give It All'
- ▶ **YANNIS PHILIPPAKIS SAYS** "From the first record until now, the trajectory has been that things are getting stripped out. And that's what we want – to make something that's a bit leaner and have less distractions in the sound."

KIT MOTEITH

WorldMags.net

Kanye works the crowd at Wango Tango in Carson, California, May 2015

HIP-HOP NEEDS TO UP ITS GAME TO HEADLINE FESTIVALS

BY **CHUCK D**

Kanye West and Public Enemy are rap's only UK festival bill toppers this year. For that to change, artists need to focus on performance, says one of the genre's forefathers

People ask me whether there should be more rap and hip-hop artists headlining major festivals, and it makes me think: once you ask for it, you better handle it. If you look around UK festivals this summer, we're headlining NASS Festival, and Kanye's headlining Glastonbury. Public Enemy can handle a stage, and I think Kanye's gotten better over the years although he's a solo performer. He's like a hip-hop Paul McCartney, in some ways.

In terms of headlining festivals, you've got to be able to nail it. If you're going to ask for a big stage, you've got to fill that stage out. Public Enemy have got those type of records that mean we can do that. You've got to do the records. If you don't do the records, the records will do you. You've got to be aggressive when you go at it, and that's a lot of work for the average artist.

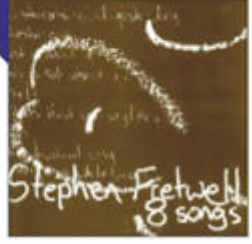
It's vital rap acts step up to the challenge of headlining festivals, because opportunities that big are shrinking. Look at the arena tour we're doing at the end of the year with The Prodigy: that's going to be interesting! Shows like that don't seem to happen so much any more for rap and hip-hop groups. You would think that hip-hop artists would want to continue playing those shows, and they'd have the backing from mainstream avenues like radio and all their big budgets. The truth is, you've got to put, like, five or six of those artists together – and if they can't play together, it doesn't work. Most of those artists are turntable artists, not anything that's based on getting down live. That's the problem. You want the art form to be transcendent. You want people to think, 'OK, I'm going to check out the best of the best now.' It's just like a sporting event. You want to watch the best. It's one of those things that I hope rap music and hip-hop can hurdle.

Public Enemy has a full live band and we put on a show. We learned that from the great bands of the '70s. From The Rolling Stones, we learned that you've got to present an event. You present an event, and you don't prevent a good show. That's what it's about. It's the art of performance. That's why I can't wait to play festivals this summer. It's 25 years since 'Fear Of A Black Planet', so we'll play a lot of music from that era, but we'll mix it up, too. We're not going to do the whole record rolled out, because that was another year. We have a new record this summer called 'Man Plans, God Laughs'. At a festival, it's about finding a balance of what you can do in a short amount of time. We like to do some new stuff, but any time your catalogue grows it means some old stuff gets left hanging.

But the most important thing for rap acts is that, to win over a festival crowd, you can't just write good songs, you've got to perform them well. If you've got something in your catalogue and people want to see it, then you can't go about it lazily. You've got to be able to handle it. You've got to deal with it. ■

▶**Public Enemy headline NASS Festival, Somerset, July 10–12**

LOST ALBUMS #76



Stephen Fretwell

8 Songs (2002)

Chosen by Liam Fray, Courteeners

"That was the reason I started writing songs really, that one record. It's so raw, it's beautiful. He's from Scunthorpe. He made everything that was very normal seem fucking out of this world. There was one song called 'Whenforever' on an EP just after, called 'Something's Got To Give', and again it was the first thing I felt like belonged to me. It wasn't on the radio, it wasn't in a magazine – I just found him in a bar and watched him, like, 'Fucking hell, this is great.' I haven't heard from him in ages; I really hope he's not finished. It was just a real uplifting record for me."

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** December 9, 2002
▶**LABEL** Northern Ambition
▶**BEST TRACKS** What's That You Say Little Girl?, Yes She Came Round Yesterday
▶**WHERE TO FIND IT** Discogs.com
▶**LISTEN ONLINE** YouTube

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OPINION INTERVIEW BY KEVIN EG PERRY PHOTOS: GETTY

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM

"YOU LISTEN TO THE MUSIC, YOU BECOME AWARE OF THE BOY"
PETE TOWNSHEND

THIS WEEK...

The Who: Tommy

Glastonbury's surprise third headliners paved the way for prog with this ambitious rock opera, first performed 45 years ago

THE BACKGROUND

Hoping to move past the youth-orientated pop of 'My Generation', Who guitarist Pete Townshend was itching to write what he'd dubbed a "rock opera". He and Who manager Kit Lambert came up with the term in 1966 when Townshend was writing a four-part piece called 'Quads', about a future where parents could choose the sex of their child. Lambert's father was a classical composer, and when Pete found himself short of material while working on second album 'A Quick One', Lambert encouraged him to create a mini-opera called 'A Quick One, While He's Away' by collating a suite of song snippets. By 1968, Townshend was developing a full-album concept called 'Deaf, Dumb And Blind Boy', inspired by Indian spiritual mentor Meher Baba, which eventually became 'Tommy'.

◀ STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

Designed by fellow Baba acolyte Mike McInnerney, the cover art of a meshwork of clouds in a void was meant to represent "a kind of breaking out of a certain restricted plane of freedom".

FIVE FACTS

1 Townshend eventually chose the name Tommy for the double-album story of a deaf and blind mute and abuse victim who grows up to be a pinball expert and spiritual leader as it was a common British name and a nickname for soldiers in WWI.

2 Other working titles included 'Journey Into Space', 'The Brain Opera' and 'Omnibus'.

3 Some songs pre-dated the album, such as 'Sally Simpson', about a show the band played with The Doors that erupted into violence, and 'I'm Free', an ode to the teachings of Meher Baba.

4 Keith Moon is credited with writing 'Tommy's Holiday Camp', but Townshend actually wrote and recorded the song. Moon's input was simply coming up with the idea of the sort of cult that Tommy would lead.

5 Radio 1 DJ Tony Blackburn criticised the single 'Pinball Wizard' for being "distasteful" in its approach to disabilities.

LYRICAL ANALYSIS

"You didn't hear it/ You didn't see it/You won't say nothing to no-one" – '1921'

Tommy's psychosomatic illness is instigated when he witnesses his missing father, presumed dead in battle, return home and kill his mother's new lover.

"Maybe a cigarette burn on your arm/ Would change your expression to one of alarm" – 'Cousin Kevin'

Things go from bad to worse for Tommy as he's abused by both his cousin Kevin and his uncle Ernie, the subject of the creepy 'Fiddle About'.

"Gather your wits and hold on fast/Your mind must learn to roam" – 'The Acid Queen'

Memorably played by Tina Turner in the movie version, the Acid Queen was a quack doctor's wife who claimed she could heal Tommy with large doses of LSD.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"Admittedly the idea is original, but it doesn't come off... Pretentious is too strong a word: maybe ambitious is the right term, but sick certainly does apply." – Allen Evans, *NME*, 1969

WHAT WE SAY NOW

Bloated, cheesy, overblown and cartoonishly offensive by today's standards, sure, but 'Tommy' contains some of The Who's finest moments in 'See Me, Feel Me' and 'Pinball Wizard', and its pioneering of the rock opera format has given us everything from '...Ziggy Stardust...' to Muse's 'Drones'.

FAMOUS FAN

"I look at 'Tommy' by The Who and think it should be played like someone interpreting Beethoven. That's what rock'n'roll has always meant to me. It's the modern classics of the 20th century and now the 21st." Billie Joe Armstrong, *Rolling Stone*, 2014

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"He's seeing things basically as vibrations which we translate as music. That's really what we want to do: create this feeling that when you listen to the music you can actually become aware of the boy, and aware of what he is all about, because we are creating him as we play." Pete Townshend, *Rolling Stone*, 1968

AFTERMATH

'Tommy' quickly took on a life of its own. After the band toured the album, in 1972 they staged a version with the London Symphony Orchestra and starring the likes of Peter Sellers, Rod Stewart and Ringo Starr. A film version was released in 1975 with Elton John, Tina Turner, Oliver Reed and Jack Nicholson. In 1993, a Broadway stage play opened and ran for two years. The 'rock opera' concept swept through '70s rock, virtually inventing prog.

▶ THE DETAILS

▶**RECORDED** September 19, 1968 – March 7, 1969 ▶**RELEASE DATE** May 23, 1969 ▶**LENGTH** 75:12 ▶**PRODUCER** Kit Lambert ▶**STUDIO** IBC Studios, London ▶**HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION** 2 ▶**WORLDWIDE SALES** 20 million ▶**SINGLES** Pinball Wizard, I'm Free/We're Not Gonna Take It, See Me, Feel Me/Overture From Tommy **TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Overture ▶2. It's A Boy ▶3. 1921 ▶4. Amazing Journey ▶5. Sparks ▶6. Eyesight To The Blind (The Hawker) ▶7. Christmas ▶8. Cousin Kevin ▶9. The Acid Queen ▶10. Underture ▶11. Do You Think It's Alright? ▶12. Fiddle About ▶13. Pinball Wizard ▶14. There's A Doctor ▶15. Go To The Mirror! ▶16. Tommy Can You Hear Me? ▶17. Smash The Mirror ▶18. Sensation ▶19. Miracle Cure ▶20. Sally Simpson ▶21. I'm Free ▶22. Welcome ▶23. Tommy's Holiday Camp ▶24. We're Not Gonna Take It

WORDS: MARK BEAUMONT PHOTO: GETTY

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STAYING IN

THE BEST MUSIC ON TV, RADIO AND ONLINE THIS WEEK

Blur perform on the new *TFI Friday* on June 12

Blur

TFI Friday

▶WATCH Channel 4, 9pm, June 12

The legendary '90s TV show returns, and brings a whole host of musical guests with it. Among some of Britpop's finest will be Blur, who'll appear alongside former arch-enemy Liam Gallagher, The Lightning Seeds' Ian Broudie and more. Years & Years and Rudimental, meanwhile, represent for the new generation and, in-between, we're guaranteed moments of hilarious and silly fun.

Everything Everything
Marc Riley

▶LISTEN 6 Music, 7pm, June 15

The Manchester art-pop band head to nearby Salford to join Marc Riley for a live session on BBC 6 Music. They'll play highlights from their forthcoming third album 'Get To Heaven', due for release next week.

Iggy Pop
BBC 6Music

▶LISTEN BBC 6Music, 7pm, June 12

The punk icon settles into his new spot on the 6 Music schedule with a playlist of his favourite songs new and old. Among the selections this week are Savages, Miles Davis and Turbonegro. An eclectic listen.

Isle Of Wight Festival
Mary Anne Hobbs

▶LISTEN BBC 6 Music, 7am, June 13

If you're not at the annual bash, tune in to Mary Anne Hobbs' show to hear from organiser John Giddings. He'll be talking about the challenges of booking one of the summer's biggest events, while Mary Anne will be spinning tunes by those on the line-up, lincluding Fleetwood Mac and The Black Keys.

Everything Everything

Blondie
Blondie's New York... And The Making Of Parallel Lines

▶WATCH BBC Four, 12am, June 12

Explore the bustling streets of NYC from Debbie Harry and the gang's perspective and go deep inside the story behind one of their greatest achievements, 'Parallel Lines'.

LINDA BROWNLEE, JORDAN HUGHES, POONEH GHANA

GOING OUT

THE BEST LIVE EVENTS THIS WEEK

Ariel Pink

The Californian oddball gives the sleazy and silly 'Pom Pom' another airing this week.

▶DATES Liverpool District (June 13), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (14), Glasgow CCA (15), Bristol Trinity Centre (16)

▶TICKETS £15; Leeds £13 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.35–£2.60 booking fee

Waxahatchee

Katie Crutchfield returns to the UK to promote latest record 'Ivy Tripp'. Girlpool support.

▶DATES London Electric Ballroom (June 10), Bristol Fleece (11), Manchester Ruby Lounge (12), Glasgow Stereo (15), Newcastle Cluny (16)

▶TICKETS £10; London £13 from NME.COM/tickets with £1–£1.30 booking fee

5 TO SEE FOR FREE

1. All Tvvins
Bar Bloc, Glasgow
▶June 10, 9pm

2. Total Babes
Old Blue Last, London
▶June 10, 8pm

3. Outfit
Rough Trade, Nottingham
▶June 13, 7pm

4. The Big Moon
Rough Trade West, London
▶June 15, 6pm

5. Metz
Rough Trade East, London
▶June 15, 7pm

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SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Spice Girls

Nirvana

Ryan Jarman

The Cribs

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING
'Only You' – The Flying Pickets
"It's an a capella cover of Yazoo's 1982 hit that was Number One over Christmas in 1983. There are videos of me and Gary singing it – we obviously really loved it."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH
'(Everything I Do) I Do It For You' – Bryan Adams
"When I was a kid I wasn't into music, I wasn't into anything, just collecting stuff out of bags of crisps. Then when that song came out I just thought it was really cool and that Bryan Adams was dead cool.

I wanted to be like him. In the video for it he had a red Stratocaster, and for that Christmas I got my mum to get me a red Stratocaster copy."

Queen's Freddie Mercury

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT
'America's Least Wanted' – Ugly Kid Joe
"I was at high school and we used to go to this weird nightclub where they'd let young kids in at school-dinner hour. They played 'Everything About You' by Ugly Kid Joe. My friend told me his cousin was selling the CD because he decided he was into rave music. So he sold it to me for £5."

"THE MUSIC CHARLES MANSON MADE IS ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT"

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO MAKE MUSIC
'About A Girl' – Nirvana
"It was just so easy to play. You learnt that and then you were in a band. It's a rite of passage for kids even now."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO
'The Past That Suits You Best' – The Delgados
"It reminds me of a time in my life that I'll never get back. We started The Cribs and we'd play with Bobby Conn. I fell in love with his nanny and I moved over to Chicago to be with her. I used to listen to that record all the time when I was out there and then the band got signed and I had to leave it all behind. I have to blank it out because I just can't think about it."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE
'Say You'll Be There' – Spice Girls
"I always end up doing something I can't pull off, like a Queen song. The last time I did karaoke it was a Spice Girls song. There's no reason why – it just came up. We were in Japan."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE
'Into The Groove' – Madonna
"This is the closest I will ever get to listening to anything that's classed as electronic dance."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD
'Get On Home' – The Manson Family
"I'm still really obsessed with Charles Manson. What he's perceived to have done is not something I'm saying that I look up to, but the way he and his Family were living in a counter-cultural way I am jealous of. They tapped into something that will never be tapped into again. They dedicated their life to searching for the art and the beauty in things, and the music they made is absolutely brilliant."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN
'Friends Will Be Friends' – Queen
"It's such a good vibe – no cynicism, no negativity. If I try and write a song from the heart, there is always cynicism and negativity in it, and I can't work that out. I sometimes think, 'God, my life is much better than I convince myself it is. All I have to do is be this band guy and I make a living out of doing it. Shit's good, so... what's your problem?'"

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF STARTING THE CRIBS
'Will You Love Me Tomorrow' – The Shirelles
"When we first started, Gary for some reason went to a caravan park on his own just to hang out. I recorded a really lo-fi version of this song. I was really psyched by it, so I got in the car and headed over to the caravan and I gave him the cassette and was like, 'I've recorded a version of this song – let's start a band that sounds exactly like this' – guitars playing girl-group music."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL
'Love Song For A Vampire' – Annie Lennox
"It's so intense. And if you chose a song from *Dracula*, it could give people the impression that maybe you're coming back and it's going to be romantic. You're going to have red eyes and we're going to have a night of passion together."

INTERVIEW: LEONIE COOPER PHOTO: CORBIS; PIETER M VAN HATTEM

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NEWS DESK

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I hope Oasis get back together. They can support us"

Blur's **Alex James** reveals his own reasons for wanting to see Noel and Liam work things out

THE NUMBERS

8

The age of Frankie, the young fan brought onstage by Dave Grohl to sing 'Times Like These' during Foo Fighters' recent Manchester gig.

80

Number of CDs on a 50th anniversary Grateful Dead boxset of 30 live shows, one from each year of the band's touring life. It will be available from September.

49

Years since The Rolling Stones played their cover of 'Hang On Sloopy'. The band slipped it into their set in Ohio on May 30.

£295,000

Royalties reportedly owed to Tame Impala by their Australian label, Modular Recordings. The dispute is the focus of a New York court case.

WHO THE FUCK IS...

Patrick Green

This is the security guard who helped save the life of Annie Clark aka St Vincent.

What happened?

Performing at the Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville, Clark climbed from the stage to the top speaker during one of her songs. However, she suffered a fall, bringing a speaker down with her and on top of a security guard working at the venue.

How did he save her?

Tweeting about the accident, Green wrote: "I was under her and manage to push her onto the stage with one hand and I tried to block the speaker with the other."

She owes him one...

Totally. Able to finish the show, Clark later uploaded a photo of her bandaged arm to Instagram.

+ GOOD WEEK +

Liam Gallagher

Liam put on his boots and lined up alongside Juventus legends Alessandro Del Piero and Pavel Nedvěd during a recent charity football match in Italy. Liam took an early bath, though, when he was substituted after 20 minutes.

– BAD WEEK –

Enrique Iglesias

The Spanish pop star was left needing surgery after slicing his hand open on a flying drone during a recent gig in Mexico. Iglesias proved his ladies man credentials by carrying on the gig, drawing a heart on his T-shirt in blood.

IN BRIEF

Muse-ical

Muse have said they want to turn new album 'Drones' into a musical. "I think it would be great to be able to do that at some point," said bass player Chris Wolstenholme.

Ashes to ashes

Welsh metal band Bullet For My Valentine are taking their fans' ashes on tour. The ashes of two dead fans will be kept in specially crafted items of jewellery and worn by members of the band during upcoming US dates with Slipknot.

▶Find these stories and more on NME.COM

Run for your life

No Devotion's Richard Oliver has recalled the moment he fought off a mountain lion during a run in California. "Made the mistake of trying for the offensive but the cat just echoed my movements. We kept a distance of about 30ft and I decided to fight back with rocks," Oliver explained after running away.

Official Record Store Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS JUNE 7, 2015

NEW 01

Jamie xx
In Colour YOUNG TURKS RECORDINGS

The London producer collates seven years of work on his debut, mixing samples and grime verses with his minimalist beats. It goes straight to Number One.

NEW	2	How Big. How Blue. How Beautiful **Florence + The Machine** ISLAND
▲	3	Are You Satisfied? **Slaves** EMI
▼	4	English Graffiti **The Vaccines** COLUMBIA
▼	5	Multi-Love **Unknown Mortal Orchestra** JAGJAGUWAR
NEW	6	Universal Themes **Sun Kil Moon** ROUGH TRADE
▼	7	Saturns Pattern **Paul Weller** PARLOPHONE
▼	8	Why Make Sense? **Hot Chip** DOMINO RECORDINGS
NEW	9	Last Of Our Kind **The Darkness** CANARY DWARF
▼	10	The Magic Whip **Blur** PARLOPHONE
▼	11	Sub-Lingual Tablet **The Fall** CHERRY RED
▼	12	Wilder Mind **Mumford & Sons** GENTLEMEN OF THE ROAD/ISLAND
NEW	13	Big Love **Simply Red** EAST WEST
▼	14	Born Under Saturn **Django Django** BECAUSE MUSIC
NEW	15	Before We Forgot How To Dream **Soak** ROUGH TRADE
▼	16	Sol Invictus **Faith No More** RECLAMATION RECORDINGS
NEW	17	Act Two **Collabro** SYCO MUSIC
▼	18	Mutilator Defeated At Last **Thee Oh Sees** CASTLE FACE
▼	19	Hozier **Hozier** ISLAND
▼	20	Sound And Color **Alabama Shakes** ROUGH TRADE
NEW	21	Currency Of Man **Melody Gardot** DECCA
▼	22	85 Percent Proof **Will Young** ISLAND
NEW	23	All Your Favorite Bands **Dawes** HUB
▼	24	Carrie & Lowell **Sufjan Stevens** ASTHMATIC KITTY
▼	25	X **Ed Sheeran** ASYLUM
▼	26	The Race For Space **Public Service Broadcasting** TEST CARD RECORDINGS
NEW	27	Before The World Was Big **Girlpool** WICHITA RECORDINGS
▲	28	The Ultimate Collection **Paul Simon** SONY MUSIC CG
NEW	29	What Kind Of Love **Danny & The Champions Of The World** LOOSE MUSIC
NEW	30	The Plague Within **Paradise Lost** CENTURY MEDIA
NEW	31	Django & Jimmie **Willie Nelson/Merle Haggard** SONY MUSIC CG
▼	32	Liquid Spirit **Gregory Porter** BLUE NOTE
▼	33	Sometimes I Sit And Think, And Sometimes I Just Sit **Courtney Barnett** HOUSE ANXIETY
▼	34	The Desired Effect **Brandon Flowers** EMI
▲	35	Tracker **Mark Knopfler** BRITISH GROVE
NEW	36	Algiers **Algiers** MATADOR
▼	37	Chasing Yesterday **Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds** SOUR MASH
NEW	38	Sprinter **Torres** PARTISAN
NEW	39	Peace Is The Mission **Major Lazer** BECAUSE MUSIC
▼	40	In The Lonely Hour **Sam Smith** CAPITOL

The Official Charts Company compiles the Official Record Store Chart from sales through 100 of the UK's best independent record shops from Sunday to Sunday.

TOP OF THE SHOPS

THIS WEEK

EMPIRE RECORDS
ST ALBANS

FOUNDED 2013

WHY IT'S GREAT Browse their extensive range of new and classic vinyl, then pick up a new record player to play your purchases on.

TOP SELLER LAST WEEK
'English Graffiti' – The Vaccines

THEY SAY "There's a massive amount of talent in St Albans, which we promote through live in-stores."

NEWSDESK COMPILED BY DAVID RENSHAW PHOTOS: RICHARD JOHNSON, CORBIS, INSTAGRAM/ALTERNATIVE NATION, TWITTER/ST VINCENT, XPOSURE

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NME NEW BAND OF THE WEEK

DMA's

The Sydney Britpop revivalists who were reared on undiluted Oasis

DMA's are a band who aren't afraid to wear their influences on their sleeves – or anywhere else, in fact. From their Kappa hats to their baggy tracksuit bottoms, the Aussie trio of singer Tommy O'Dell and songwriters Matt Mason and Johnny Took (plus three additional live members) make no bones about being in thrall to the Madchester and Britpop sounds that circled the globe when they were growing up down under.

"There are a bunch of bands from all over the world doing that Britpop sound now," says Mason, "but none of them are from England." Took nods in agreement. "A big part of it is the generation that we're in," he says. "We're the first generation to have the internet, and that means the world has gotten a lot smaller."

They're bullish words, but then again, that's exactly the kind of band DMA's are. To witness them play live is to see a bunch of rock'n'roll obsessives who never got as far as 1998 in the music history books – a barrage of guitars (acoustic and electric), major chords, maracas and a bunch of hands-in-the-air anthems. 'Delete', their best and only genuinely lovelorn song, is truly thrilling, and at the centre of it all is Tommy and his voice – kookily similar to what Liam Gallagher sounded like back in 1994, *before* the cigs and booze fully took hold.

Having already conquered radio back home, their plan now involves a move north – far north. "We wanna base ourselves in the northern hemisphere," says Mason, explaining that although the weather's peachy back home, logistically the lack of big cities in close proximity is holding the band back.

"I kind of enjoy going back to square one," shrugs Took about relocating, while Mason says the band are also relishing the way they've been taking audiences by surprise over here recently. "People don't even know who we are. There is almost no reaction. When we walked onstage yesterday [at Brighton's Great Escape festival], despite the fact that it was packed it was just silence. It's good." Just don't bet on things staying quiet for them for too much longer...

■ KEVIN EG PERRY

▼ ON NME.COM/NEWMUSIC NOW
▶Watch a live performance of 'Your Low' recorded at The Great Escape

▶THE DETAILS

▶**BASED** Sydney, Australia
▶**FOR FANS OF** Oasis, The Stone Roses
▶**SOCIAL** facebook.com/dmasdmas
▶**BUY IT NOW** DMA's self-titled EP is out now on Mom + Pop Music
▶**SEE THEM LIVE** Latitude Festival (July 16–19), Truck Festival (July 17–18), Reading And Leeds Festivals (August 28–30)
▶**BELIEVE IT OR NOT** At a record label meeting, one unfortunate A&R repeatedly referred to the band as 'DNA' – to their faces

JORDAN HUGHES

MORE NEW MUSIC

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK

Deaths

Berlin trio Deaths are an intriguing proposition, with new track 'Saviour' siphoning Jai Paul's production from 'BTSTU' and twinning it with a lyric that's as gloomy as anything King Krule's ever spat out. "*I told you I should be the one*", Igor Bruso muses. The track's a perfect mix of bruised defiance and brooding confidence.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/churchofdeaths
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/churchofdeaths

Deaths

Fehm

Combining The Cure's quavering guitars, Bauhaus' haunted narratives and the visceral yelps of PiL, Fehm are the latest great dandies from the underworld. Songs such as 'Eyes Full' and 'Hand To Mouth' sound like they've been conjured up by Lovecraftian witches. Paul Riddle's vocals are as captivating as menacing.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/fehmband
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/fehmband

Favela

Since we last told you about Leeds-based producer Favela over a year ago, he's disappeared, reappeared, signed to Transgressive imprint paradYse, and released new single 'Future Visions'. Buoyed by a hazy, shuffling beat and swooning strings, it fulfils every inch of his early appeal.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/musicfavela
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/favelamusic
▶SEE HIM LIVE Leeds Brudenell Social Club (June 10)

The Bad Years

If you were the sort of psychotic maniac who'd try to mix The Kills with The Cardigans and then add a dash of Lee Hazelwood, you'd get somewhere close to the kind of outsider pop of The Bad Years. The 'Beautiful Liar' EP is packed with cuts that are tortured but uplifting. With its polished sunshine-pop chorus, the title track is the best place to start.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/thebadyears
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/thebadyears

Flo Morrissey

It's not just the name that Flo Morrissey shares with Florence Welch. The London-based singer also channels a similarly hippyish sensibility, from the pastoral vocals to her fondness for flowing frocks. But there's a Lana Del Rey slickness present here and on her lush debut album, 'Tomorrow Will Be Beautiful', out in June via Glassnote.
▶SOCIAL twitter.com/flomorrissey
▶HEAR HER soundcloud.com/flomorrissey
▶SEE HER LIVE London Courtyard Theatre (June 18), End of The Road (September 4–6)

Eastern Barbers

'Shallow', the debut track from Eastern Barbers, could only be more south London if it mugged you on Coldharbour Lane. Its jazzy romanticism collides into muted beats before falling away unexpectedly, as if King Krule and Jamie xx couldn't be bothered to finish off their collaboration, leaving it sodden with melancholia and potential.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/easternbarbers1
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/easternbarbers

Flo Morrissey

Safe To Swim

Brighton's Safe To Swim are "four dudes living life to the fullest" – as made evident by their presence at many of The Great Escape's raucous house parties last month. This hedonistic claim resonates well with the band's sound, with debut track 'Forget Life. Repeat.' standing out for its catchy vocals, giddy synth hook and shredding guitars.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/safetoswimband
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/safetoswim

Outblinker

With Fuck Buttons' Ben Power working alongside them, experimental electro-krautrock act Outblinker look set to cause something of a racket. New single 'Pink' shows that the Glasgow band have a keen taste for harmonious, repetitive noise – but the rhythms and textures on this 11-minute maelstrom are as blissful as they are boisterous. Unsurprisingly, the →

BAND CRUSH

Father John Misty

Gambles

"There's a guy called Gambles. His name is Matthew Siskin and he's the last contemporary guy that made my ears perk up. It's the plaintive sound of a guy with an acoustic guitar, but he has an honest voice; it's not some put-on folk affectation."

SOPHIE HARRIS TAYLOR, NICO STINGHE, EMMA TILLMANN

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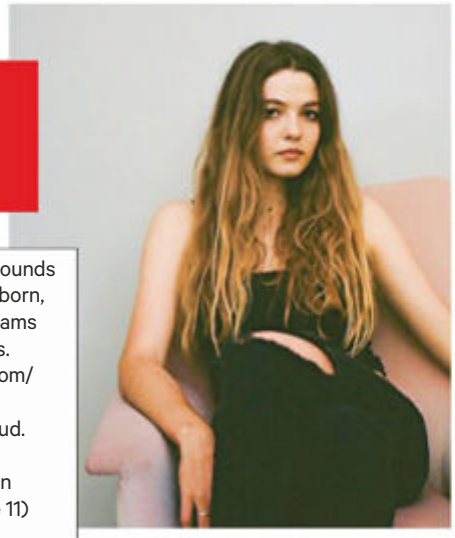

Kita

quintet are big fans of Sunn O))), Neu! and Godspeed You! Black Emperor.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/outblinker
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/outblinker
▶SEE THEM LIVE London Waiting Room (June 11), Glasgow Stereo (13)

Piano Wire

Former Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster members Andy Huxley and Symren Gharial carry over a lot of the neurotic goth-punk tendencies of their previous outlet, but new band Piano Wire is more than just an offshoot. Debut mini-LP 'The Genius Of The Crowd' features scuzzy grunge gruesomeness and drums set to 'murder'.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/pianowireband
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/piano-wire
▶SEE THEM LIVE London Shacklewell Arms (June 16), Brighton Green Door Store (22)

Dornik

It's no surprise to hear that Disclosure and Jessie Ware have taken a liking to Croydon's Dornik – his brand of seductive, soulful R&B is perfectly suited to their chart-topping clique.

Debut single 'Drive' sounds like The Neptunes reborn, with staccato guitar jams and a funked-up bass.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/dornikmusic
▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/dornik
▶SEE HIM LIVE London Fields Brewery (June 11)

Kita

Australian artist Kita has introduced herself in immaculate style via 'My Own Way', which pairs her husky voice with downcast disco vibes and melancholic bliss. Comparisons to Haim have already begun, but 'My Own Way', feels more introspective and considered than that, with Kita's sultry voice sounding genuinely individual.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/kitaalexandermusic
▶HEAR HER soundcloud.com/kitaalexandermusic

Field Studies

Field Studies have a knack for crafting atmospheric indie pop songs in the vein of Wu Lyf. Check 'Mother Tongue', a sedate post-punk track packed with cosmic tremolo chord bends,

Field Studies

pensive lyrics and a spacey guitar solo, or forthcoming single 'Money Of America', an angrier departure into Foo Fighters' realm of arena-rock euphoria.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/fieldstudiesband
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/fieldstudies-1

Family Friends

Fronted by siblings Tom and Rebecca Fitzsimons, psychpop gang Family Friends take their cues from Speedy Ortiz, with woozy harmonies and effervescent guitars. The Anglo-Aussie quintet's forthcoming EP, 'Across The Water', is packed with more languid, grunge-leaning jams.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/familyfriendsband
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/family-friends

Elohim

It's normal to hate 'that' person at any given party who puts a pin in the balloon with their raft of dull stories, but LA's brightest new hitmaker, Elohim, has gone further and written a killer pop song about it. "*I'm on a good one now/But she brings me down*", she cusses over a Grimes-like beat and spiralling synth loops on 'She Talks Too Much'.
▶SOCIAL facebook.com/elohimonline
▶HEAR HER soundcloud.com/elohimelohim

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

ROYAL HEADACHE RETURN

One of Australia's most exciting and best punk bands, Royal Headache will release their long-awaited new album 'High' on August 21 via What's Your Rupture?. It's a welcome return for the band, whose 2013 single 'Stand And Stare' was named *Radar*'s Track Of The Year.

SHOWS BLOSSOMING

Manchester's Blossoms hit the road in October for a series of sure-to-be-buzzy shows, including headline dates at London's Village Underground and a homecoming at The Ritz. The tour will follow performances at T In The Park, Festival No 6 and Kendal Calling.

Best Friends

Blossoms

BEST FRIENDS WITH BIRDSKULLS

Sheffield newcomers Best Friends have announced a headline tour in support of their forthcoming debut 'Hot. Reckless. Totally Insane', and they're bringing Brighton's Birdskulls along for the ride. The album is due July 4, with eight UK dates following later that month.

GULF STREAM

Gulf have maintained their run of good form with new Soundcloud track 'Ocean', which is their most essential distillation of sideways guitar music yet. In it, the Liverpudlians upturn conventional song structures, collapsing from a crystalline verse into a chorus awash with hits of guitar and leering synths.

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WORDS: MATT WILKINSON, JAMES BENTLEY, PHIL GWYN, TIM HAKKI, LEONIE COOPER, DAN CARSON
PHOTOS: DANIEL TOPETE

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Bells Atlas

Bells Atlas

Bells Atlas' "kaleidosonic soul punch" is a mix of tropical R&B, leftfield electronica and percussive rhythms. With hypnotic, layered guitars on 'Bling', pitter-patter rhythms on 'Future Bones' and a psychedelic mishmash that Goat would be proud of on 'Sugar For The Queen', the California band sound alluringly exotic. Throw in Sandra Lawson-Ndu's breathy, soulful vocals and they're the complete mystical package.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/hearbellsmusic

▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/bellsatlas

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Buzz Records

▶FOUNDED 2011 by Denholm Whale, Ian Chai, Dean Tzenos and Jude

▶BASED Toronto

▶KEY RELEASES Hsy – 'Hsy' (2013), Weaves – 'EP' (2014), Dilly Dally – 'Candy Mountain' (2014)

▶RADAR SAYS Evolving from the scene around Toronto venue The Garage, Buzz was formed out of "necessity", says Chai. They're now an important home to some of Canada's most eclectic new garage bands.

Guns

Guns is a 24-year-old Norwegian who goes by the distinctly less dangerous name of Gunhild Jarwson Tekle by day, and her debut track 'Ricochet' is a woozy, melodic and near enough flawless way to introduce herself. It envelopes everything in the vicinity with floating guitars and swelling production that feels every bit as life affirming and perfect as Beach House.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/gunsmusicofficial

▶HEAR HER soundcloud.com/gunsmusicofficial

DBFC

Parisian quartet DBFC claim to "refuse to choose between making dance records and rock records". It's an approach that's vindicated by their first two tracks, which fling fluid dance music into the context of a band. The first, 'Leave My Room', is driven by a dark, pulsating rhythm, like LCD Soundsystem on a serious downer, but it's the motorik of 'Staying Home' that really impresses.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/dbfctheband

▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/dbfc

Frances

There is no shortage of piano-attached balladeers, which makes it even more impressive that Frances manages to make herself feel essential before the four minutes of 'Grow' are up. It begins innocuously enough, with Frances' pristine voice stretching out, shaping every vowel and enveloping all around it. Things then take a leftwards turn, as emotional cracks start to appear around the song's edges, making 'Grow' sound as earthy as it is cathartic.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/officialfrances

▶HEAR HER soundcloud.com/frances_music

▶SEE HER LIVE London Shepherds Bush St Stephen's Church (June 13), Somersault Festival (July 23)

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

This week's columnist

JONNY ALLAN

Happyness

PET SHOP SOUNDS

Everything we know about **Monterey Jackson** is based on a 25-minute encounter in a pet shop in Luxembourg and a lot of (probably inaccurate) extrapolation. The shop's focus was around 89 per cent domestic pets, one per cent axolotls and 10 per cent MJ merchandise: a career's worth of recorded material on USB sticks, some surplus litter trays full of handwritten stories and about five pairs of badly knitted children's socks with the words "Cut" and "Pasted" written on left and right. We didn't talk to the owner much (he was busy with a hard sell when we came in), but it turns out Monterey Jackson is his chanteur nephew. We can't find him online, so the only song of his we've ever heard is the one we bought – 'The Source'. It's pretty much a guy hitting a piano, and it came taped to a short story called 'The Word That Was Cut But Never Pasted', which begins, "There once was a word that was cut but never pasted. And all the other words, passing him on the clipboard, would shrug as if to say, 'Any second now!'"

Something you definitely *can* hear comes recommended by our drummer, Ash. He saw **Hovvdy** (pronounced Howdy) at the Helios co-op in Austin during SXSW. They seem to have an innate sense of exactly how much to throw at a song and have an EP out on Drip Tapes. They have a kind of sputtering quality to the drums that we're very envious of and want to know how to do.

Support bands have a habit of falling down stairs the day before our shows – luckily **Plastic Animals** didn't. We played with them at Sneaky Pete's in Edinburgh. They are currently recording an album, but check out 'Burial Party' to find out what an "atmospheric punk rock sludge ensemble" sounds like.

Danger Ron And The Spins

"Hovvdy have a sort of sputtering quality to their drums"

'Johnny Boy' by **Danger Ron And The Spins** is a fantastic song. We hung out at their studio one night after we played with them in St Paul, Minnesota and pretty much spent it skateboarding shakily and trying to weigh enough to register on industrial goods scales. They didn't play 'Johnny Boy' live, like how Elton John doesn't play 'Candle In The Wind' (presumably).

We also hung out with **Pope** at SXSW. The song 'Will Taylor' gets kinda intimate ("*I want to be a thought in your head*"). They recently brought out their debut album 'Fiction' (ie, 'Pope Fiction'). Check it out! ■

Next week: DFA Records

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The hour has finally come for perennial buzz band Wolf Alice. On the eve of their grunge-inflected debut album 'My Love Is Cool', the cross-dressing north Londoners tell Gavin Haynes why they're playing the long game

PHOTO BY DEAN CHALKLEY

HUNGRY LIKE THE WOLF

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The Florin is the sort of unreconstructed Irish pub that is becoming harder and harder to find, even on London's unfashionable Holloway Road. Racing on the telly. One beaten-up old pool table. Several beaten-up old geezers propping up the stained serving counter. A jukebox bleating out New Kids On The Block's key-change monstrosity 'This One's For The Children'. Not a £12 pulled-pork burger on a ceramic tile in sight.

It was here that Wolf Alice played one of their very first gigs four years ago, as part of a local talent night that pitted them against an Elvis impersonator. "It was a bizarre show," recalls singer Ellie Rowsell, pointing to where the stage once stood in the corner. "I remember being up there, playing to half a dozen people, and this man walking up to the front of the stage. He said to me, 'Do you mind if I go out for a cigarette?' I just mumbled back at him, 'Uh, yeah, sure,' mid-verse, and kept on singing."

Later, they recorded the video to 2013 single 'Fluffy' here: a spoof that ended with them parodying their early ambitions by playing the same mini-stage. "Only we filled the place with so much dry ice that it set off all the fire alarms," Ellie says. "The girl who was working here didn't know how to turn them off. A fire engine turned up. We were all, uh, barred for life, I believe..."

Today, confidently flouting the ban, Wolf Alice are on the threshold of Something Big. They've almost sold out Brixton Academy, and the show's not until September. Their spiky singles routinely make the Radio 1 playlist. And their long-awaited debut album will leave the Elvis impersonators of Holloway for dust.

The band are still recovering from the jet lag of a successful American tour as they array themselves in The Florin's corner table one Thursday evening. Ellie, in a blousy halter-top, topaz necklace and jeans, looks teenage and unbothered. Her fellow founder-member and guitarist, Joff Oddie, sits on her right; dressed in a Ralph Lauren black-and-white checked shirt, he has an air of being slightly older, or at least posher, than everyone else. Next to him is drummer Joel Amey, an excitable joke machine in a Hawaiian shirt and dog tags. Finally, bassist Theo Ellis seems to be fronting some other band he hasn't quite worked out the details of yet; with his bleach-blond short hair and boyish face, he's pitched it somewhere between Marc Almond and White Rose Movement. He's the most talkative and brash, argumentative even.

The entire band are drinking Guinness, and Ellie's dad (whom she calls Rob) is buying. Her younger brother Kevin – a tall and awkward shade of 17 – sits next to him under the jukebox. This is home turf: the family house Ellie still lives in is just few blocks away. Under grilling, Rob confirms that his daughter was "a very pleasant child" and "no trouble". But, perhaps sensing that some weird line between the domestic and professional is being breached by his continued presence, he soon make his excuses and leaves with Kevin.

It's been a long, drawn-out rise for Wolf Alice. They were a buzz band in 2012, in 2013 and 2014. In fact, they've been the name on everyone's lips for so long that, come last year, it felt like they might have blown it. Two EPs – 2013's 'Blush' and 2014's 'Creature Songs' – ratcheted up the expectations, but the lack of a debut album kept them marooned in the paddling pool. The incessant hype machine has already seen plenty of new contenders come and go while we've been waiting for Wolf Alice to either shit or get off the pot.

But then, Wolf Alice are not one of those bands that arrived on the scene with a fully formed look, sound and 10-point manifesto. The fact that they've never had a plan – only a lot of vim and dedication – has been written

"We once went to a '90s music quiz and we scored zero points"

ELLIE ROWSELL

WorldMags.net

into their own folklore. "We've spent years wandering around in the dark, looking for the light switch," is how Joff puts it. When they posted the countrified Mazzy Star lilt of 'Leaving You' in October 2012 – source of their initial buzz – there was definitely no 12-track album ready to go behind it. "Everything has been catch-up to some degree," Joff admits. Working out what Wolf Alice was or could be was as much a mystery to the band members as it was to everybody else. The challenge, then, was to make the group while simultaneously touring it. Which is a bit like jumping out of a plane with a length of silk, a needle and some thread, and trying to fashion a parachute before you hit the ground.

Where they fit in has been another question they've had to answer on the fly. They've been cast as a retro alt-rockers – the end product of the grunge revival that bloomed three years ago with Yuck, Cheatahs and Splashh. But they don't see themselves as '90s revivalists.

"We once went to a '90s music quiz," says Ellie, "and we scored zero points. So I'm not so sure we're the '90s band everyone thinks we are." Neither are they the frothing Belly and Hole fans that their output often suggests. "There are definitely grunge elements," Ellie concedes. "But early on, I said that our album was 100 per cent not a grunge record, because I don't want people who are into grunge music to be disappointed. There's not one sole genre. I don't think we kept to purely grunge."

Their soft-loud seems to come from a different place to that of the Pixies or Nirvana, driven by the sheer taste clashes of the various members. This, after all, is a band who, as Joff points out, "are into both Deftones and Miley Cyrus". Theo was an art-punk who got a jump-start from seeing the The Horrors. The first album Joel ever bought was 'Hybrid Theory' by Linkin Park, and for five years he listened to "nothing but hardcore punk". Ellie's first album was 'Missundaztood' by Pink. Joff was a finger-picking guitarist who dug Willy Mason.

What unites them is the stuff you wouldn't expect. Wolf Alice were just too young to be recruited by The Libertines' raggle-taggle army. Instead, they found their generational moment in the broader range of arty indie that bloomed in The Libs' wake. Although they were contemporaries, the band cite underrated Brighton psychobillies The Eighties Matchbox B-line Disaster as an inspiration, while Patrick Wolf also figures massively. "He was really diverse and weird," Theo enthuses. "On 'Wind In The Wires', percussively, he was doing things Death Grips would be envious of." Ellie: "I remember seeing him at the Union Chapel [in Islington, London], and that being the first time I'd ever seen a glitter cannon go off."

With only modest amounts of irony, they've taken to dubbing what they do simply as "rocky pop", and soon the world will be able to see what they mean, when 'My Love Is Cool' finally drops at the end of June.

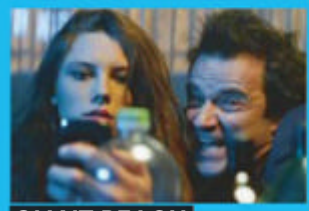
It's an album that specialises in sugar-coating its darkness, putting butterfly wings on its bullets. The short story by Angela Carter that the band are named after is about a girl raised by wolves. Captured and brought back to the human world, Tarzan-style, she then has to learn about shame, regret and fear of death from seeing everyone around her react to behaviours she once thought normal.

That idea of innocence versus experience seems very apt. There's a longing to 'My Love Is Cool' that comes through in the lyrics, a nostalgia for lost idylls. 'Bros', for instance, is a tender evocation of childhood friendship: "*You are my best friend/There's no-one, there's no-one that knows me like you do*". It's about Ellie's old friend Sadie, penned after she recalled all the times people had asked them "if they were brothers" because of their terrible haircuts and un-feminine low voices.

From the soft, Air-like intro of 'Turn To Dust' with its invocations of magick and fairytale – "*Keep your beady eyes on me to make sure I don't turn to dust*" – to the 'Dear Prudence' psychedelic mangle of 'Your Love's Whore', to the gloomy '80s indie psychedelia of 'Silk', there's an enchantment to what Wolf Alice do that transcends the many genres they skip through. 'Swallowtail' explores the folkier end of their spectrum, with Joel singing muzzy ↦

DRAG! DOUGHNUTS! LUTES!

Wolf Alice's best videos



GIANT PEACH

Tony Gardner, aka Dan Miller from *The Thick Of It*, stars in an extended skit about an overenthusiastic band manager trying to whip his progeny through the rock'n'roll clichés, before they inexplicably end up in a medieval forest for a bit of lute-based hoedown.

BROS

Two pre-teen tomboys cement a friendship on the streets of London, falling out of trees, sharing doughnuts in a caff, hacking down daisies and generally inventing a day out they will soon enough feel desperately nostalgic for.

BLUSH

Joel inexplicably pretends to sing the song while wearing a dress. Most closely resembles the time Oasis went on *Top Of The Pops* and swapped their instruments.

SHE

The first part of a two-parter with 'Blush', explaining the backstory of why Joel appeared in a dress. Turns out it was all some kind of dream sequence after a row over a girl...

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lines over becalmed acoustic guitars, while at the other end, 'Soapy Water' ratchets up the electronic textures into something resembling Poliça or Garbage.

Grunge certainly still gets a look-in. Most notably, there's the vicious 'Fluffy' and the gaping Hole of 'Giant Peach', corkscrewing-in halfway through the album with the ferocity of the Crossrail tunnel-digger.

Yet, despite the heavy air of portent streaked through 'My Love Is Cool', in the flesh Wolf Alice are very much four jokers in a pack; bants-merchants, with absolutely no airs or graces. They're part of a generation of bands who, thanks to always-on nature of internet culture, have had to ditch a lot of the hauteur that previously came with being a rock star.

There are *Simpsons*-referencing song titles – 'Moaning Lisa Smile' is a nod to a first season episode. In fact, *The Simpsons* is something they collectively take very seriously. "Everyone knows a Homer and a Bart," Ellie points out. "We've grown up with them; they're like our second family. I've learned half my life morals from *The Simpsons*."

Then there's the endless stream of tongue-in-cheek videos – like 'Fluffy', in which they spoof lame animal-obsessed vloggers with acoustic guitars, or the 'Giant Peach' promo, which sees all four rocking out with lutes in medieval costumes in the middle of a forest.

Ellie thinks being daft is part of the job. "When a label gives you money to make a video, it feels so surreal anyway, the best thing to do is to have fun with it."

Joff: "We have to take the piss out of ourselves a little bit."

Joel: "I have to say, the other day, when I was dressed up like Robin Hood, running around this golf course, I did feel like I was winning at something."

Joff asserts: "But I think one thing we all have in common is that we all take this band really, really seriously. Even before the people around us were taking it seriously. We have ambition to play bigger stages."

How big?

"The biggest you can imagine."

Does that mean courting the kind of fan who buys their albums in Asda? A groan goes around the table.

"I think there's a level of snobbiness on that side," says Joel.

Theo: "You can't choose your fans, can you? And if you do, then you don't deserve them. I'm fine so long as nobody's abhorrently racist or sexist. I don't want to play a Ukip conference."

Joel: "Someone like Bob Dylan, he said: 'I'm a performer.' And that's how we feel. The ego doesn't follow the size of the audience."

They've already played The O2, as support to Alt-J, but as it stands, they have both the motive and the means to do it themselves. That's one of the reasons they've taken their sweet time in getting here – to get it right. For all the unplanned nature of their success, Ellie is already measuring the project out in decades, arguing that "it might take us 10 years to get where we want to be".

A mere six days further into that process of becoming, behind a hidden door built into the brickwork of a wall in Islington, down a twisty flight of stairs, slumped on a burgundy leather sofa, the band are in their management's offices, recording a video interview for *NME*. After they've all said their piece, Ellie runs through another interview about her favourite songs.

New York anti-folk duo The Moldy Peaches, she says, made her want to be in a band. "'Nothing Came Out' – I've got demos of me and my friend covering that when we were 14."

But when she gets asked what song reminds her of high school is, she crinkles her nose. "Hmmm," she says, dismissively. Was school agony?

"Well, I was definitely over it in the last two years. Me and my friends liked to wallow. We liked to moan: 'Why don't we know any boys?'"

Was she the little grunger in the corner?

"At the start, yeah. But then, everyone moved onto dubstep and club music."

And you didn't?

"It wasn't my scene."

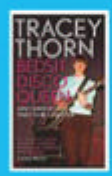
It feels like Ellie still sees herself as a work in progress. She's a reserved sort: witty, but her gags are all side-of-the-mouth bon mots rather

ROWSELL'S READING LIST

The frontwoman's literary tips

Edie: An American Biography By Jean Stein

"It starts all the way back at ['It Girl' Edie Sedgwick's] distant ancestors and goes through all the way after her death. If there's a moral, it's probably "Don't take drugs". But outside of that, I think it gives you a sense of what a carefree person she was."



Bedsit Disco Queen: How I Grew Up And Tried To Be A Pop Star By Tracey Thorn

"She was so chill about stuff. She just seemed to fall into the world of bands. It wasn't like: 'I was always meant to do this', it was like, 'Oh, how did this happen?' She makes it all seem like a great adventure."

Just Kids By Patti Smith

"That really inspired me, again because she was so normal. I always thought because she's so poetic, I wouldn't be able to see the normal person in her, but it's all very human and actually very funny. "

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"It's me onstage, but me without any inhibitions"

ELLIE ROWSELL

than table-banging anecdotes. Fronting the big rock band she wants Wolf Alice to become can't be achieved without giving up more of herself than she seems comfortable with. Even as recently as two years ago, at the early shows, her personal performances offered a literal definition of shoegazing. Yet somewhere since then she's bloomed into a ballgown-wearing, high-kicking mosher. Onstage, at least...

"Yeah, I guess being onstage, you're allowed to explore. It's like a mini life. I could see a dress in a shop and think, 'I'd never wear that,' but then I think, 'Oh, that'd be good for onstage.'"

Who is that person onstage?

"It's me, but me without any inhibitions."

Do you feel you care overly what people think of you sometimes?

"I feel like so long as I'm not offending anyone, I don't, no. But..."

You've become more confident, though?

"Maybe I'm still not 100 per cent confident, but I feel like that was partly just from looking at myself on videos and cringing. After a while, I realised... I realised that if I was going to make mistakes, I should at least be myself when making them."

Her recent reading list is composed almost entirely of non-fiction books about girls in music and the arts: the memoirs of The Slits' Viv Albertine, Everything But The Girl's Tracey Thorn, Kim Gordon, Patti Smith, and Jean-Michel Basquiat's ex-girlfriend Alexis Adler [see sidebar]. She apparently often takes a female friend on tour, as moral support. But ask her if, straight-up, she feels isolated as a girl in a boys-in-bands world, and she demurs.

"I always say this, but I'm still getting used to 'being in a band'. That's all still new to me, so I don't often consider 'being a girl in a band'..."

Do you feel like you've changed a lot over the past few years?

"...I think quite a bit." She stalls. "I have tried my hardest to do everything naturally. You have to find out who you are by trying lots of things. But now I just try not to force anything."

She mentions the Kim Gordon book. "One thing that resonated with me was when she said something like: 'Why do people want to be in rock bands? Is it because they don't want to grow up?'"

Do you feel that kind of arrested development in yourself?

"I think you can sometimes feel not ready for something."

Isn't that something you should push past? An immaturity?

She searches for the correct words. "I don't think it's that you're not ready to grow up." She thinks. "It's more like... you're just taking everything in."

Albums brimming with dark enchantment and that kind of pining nostalgia can often come from that kind of a place. There's something in Rowsell that is forever drinking it all in, feeling things more intensely than she can always express, and looking back with a wounded wistfulness about the sheer immutable passage of time. Whether she's ready for growing up or not, she can console herself with knowing that, in 10 years' time, there will likely be plenty more peaks to be nostalgic about.

In the background, Joff and Joel wander back into the room and start making themselves cups of tea at the kitchenette counter. So where *wouldn't* Wolf Alice want to be in 10 years' time?

"Prison..." Joff jumps in, before Ellie can respond, "...or Hull."

All three giggle. But they won't be laughing quite so hard the next time their tourbus crosses the Humber. ■

Girl In A Band By Kim Gordon

"It's the story of Sonic Youth, told from her perspective. There's a lot, obviously, about her relationship with Thurston Moore. I read it immediately after I'd read the Tracey Thorn one and the Viv Albertine one, so I felt like I was slightly over these stories of girls in bands."

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50 Greatest Summer Anthems

Shades out, shorts on, crank up the barbie rock! Festival season is go, so here's rock's A-listers picking the songs that get them hot under the collar

Florence Welch

Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds
Jubilee Street

"I think this was the song that summed up the last summer I had. That was the summer that I was writing 'How Big, How Blue, How Beautiful'. It's so beautiful, it's like something just opening out, but I don't think it's particularly summery. I would probably still try to put it on at a barbecue, though. That does happen. I'm like, 'Can we just listen to Nick?' and everyone's like, 'No! Like, come on!' So yeah, I'm not sure I'm the best person to ask for light, summery tracks!"

Thom Yorke

Prince Buster Too Hot

"I used to have this Prince Buster CD. A friend of mine had this Land Rover and he parked in the middle of the beach and turned the stereo up and we just had Prince Buster all night long."

Tom McFarland

Jungle

Marlena Shaw
California Soul

"That's something I'd always put on when it's a nice sunny day. It's got that feeling where you put a song on and you just feel warm. I think that's a good trait in a song."

Dominic McGuinness

The Bohicas

The Kinks Plastic Man

"Whenever we're on tour, or if I'm in a car with friends, there's no better soundtrack than a 'best of' by The Kinks. Especially when the sun's out. It feels like their music only exists in sunshine. Beginning in spring with tracks like 'Days' or 'Wonderboy' and setting on 'Autumn Almanac'. But tracks like 'Plastic Man' remind me of summer. I have countless memories of screaming word for word every lyric in various vehicles on various motorways. It's full of joy and humour, backed up with some badass musicianship."

Harry Koisser Peace

Yacht Psychic City

"I had a favourite summer tune that was a remix, 'Psychic City'. It was played everywhere!"

Shaun Ryder

DJ Jazzy Jeff And The Fresh Prince
Summertime

"Jazzy Jeff and the fucking Fresh Prince Of Bellend. I remember when that first came out, because we were prancing around Amsterdam at the time, and it always seemed to be on. It brings back some good vibes and good memories."

Carl Barât

The Velvet Underground
Cool It Down

"When I had my summer of self-realisation when I was about 14, I discovered The Velvet Underground. I realised there was more to life than TV, radio and school... I found The Velvet Underground and created my own world, which was a mix of Hampshire and New York in my head. I had 'Cool It Down' on cassette and listened to it on my headphones as I walked around town singing: *'But me I'm down around the corner/You know I'm lookin' for Miss Linda Lee/Because she's got the power to love me by the hour...'* It's about living in the moment, enjoying the sunshine and feeling the earth revolve."

Rat Boy

A Tribe Called Quest
I Left My Wallet In El Segundo

"This reminds of summer 2012 when I would film me and my mates skating around in Essex. The sun was shining for once and I remember I stole a Flip camera from school and made the fisheye for it out of a peephole. I chose this song as one of the lead tracks for the video. It was a real scummy sunny summer and that video won't ever see the light of day. It's got random footage of my mates eating crickets and washing them down with Red Stripe. It was also the summer I lost my virginity. It's definitely my summer tune, 'cos 'I Left My Wallet...' has that sampled riff and beat that makes me think of my mates drinking in our town. We still do that."

Paul Banks
Interpol
▶**Frank Black**
The Adventure And The Resolution

"This is one of the most badass songs I know. No vocals except for some soft 'ooh'-ing. It's got a sinister and sexy vibe and it will give you a rush if you listen to it driving fast on a summer night."

Stephen Malkmus
▶**Jimmy Buffett**
Margaritaville

"It reminds me of going to Florida with my parents in the '70s. They would leave me at the pool while they'd go to the bar and drink mai tais. They had kids already, so they couldn't really live up to the wild, swinging ways of Jimmy Buffett."

Jason Williamson
Sleaford Mods
▶**Wiley** On A Level

"It's just really English. In a way, it's quite crap but it's not; it works and it's funny. It's very cool and quite perfect. Grime is definitely something I'm getting my ears around."

Svein Berge
Röyksopp
▶**Roland Cedermark**
Mister Sandman

"A true summer classic. I'm not too keen on accordion music, but this... To be enjoyed with a slight sunburn and plenty of grub."

Alloysious Massaquoi
Young Fathers
▶**William Onyeabor**
Fantastic Man

"He's a Nigerian artist from the late '70s and early '80s. There's deeply political messages contained in these simple, exciting pop songs."

Lemmy Motörhead
▶**The Byrds**
Mr Tambourine Man

"I remember that song from the summer of '65. What make it so great? Well, I was young. When you're young, you're free, you've got nothing to worry about, every summer's a great summer."

Mike Skinner
▶**Dizzee Rascal**
Bonkers

"For those moments where people go absolutely crazy it's all about the big grime hits. I don't like playing too much grime, but there are always a couple of tunes that are absolute monsters. 'Bonkers' is fantastic."

Goat
▶**Canned Heat**
Going Up The Country

"It's a classic one, the perfect summer song, something that makes you think of warm weather and travelling."

Paul Smith
Maximo Park
▶**Red House Painters**
Summer Dress

"This song always reminds me of a hot day walking around my hometown with my teenage crush, feeling like my world was just about to begin."

Killer Mike
Run The Jewels
▶**The 2 Live Crew**
We Want Some Pussy

"Those guys created the soundtrack to summer for me. I would say that anyone who needs an explanation as to why that song ranks so high is obviously a moron!"

Kieran Shudall
Circa Waves
▶**Pixies** Debaser

"I connect that bassline and guitar to being in a car when it's blisteringly hot, windows down, blasting it out."

Chuck D
▶**LL Cool J**
Tell Tha World

"It just sounds like summer time. It's on his latest record, which is really good stuff. He's been putting out good music for 31 years. You can't sleep on that. I think when you tell people that LL Cool J has been doing it for 31 years they just go into denial. That dude has been tight for a really long time."

Tom Morello
Rage Against The Machine
▶**Tool** Undertow

"We were on tour with Tool for Lollapalooza '93. We were on first and RATM were just beginning to break in the States and we had loads of adventures. Every day I would go see Tool's set from the side of the stage 'cos I thought they were just awesome."

The Black Keys
▶**Joe Hill Louis**
Boogie In The Park

"We love this song 'cos it's hotter than a Memphis summer."

Brian Briggs
Stornoway
▶**Teenage Fanclub**
Ain't That Enough

"Chiming fuzz guitars, rich harmonies and glockenspiel combine into the most uplifting piece of indie-pop I know. From the album 'Songs From Northern Britain', and influenced by the blue-sky photographs of highland scenery on the album cover, it instantly transports me to a warm and glorious place. I crank it up and escape instantly."

ZACKERY MICHAEL, DEAN CHALKLEY, MATT SALACUSE, DAN DENNISON, PIETER M VAN HATTEM, TOM OXLEY, JORDAN HUGHES, BRINSON + BANKS, ANDY HUGHES, ED MILES, RICHARD JOHNSON, CORBIS

Alex Kapranos
FFS/Franz Ferdinand

Shamir On The Regular

"I think it might be a summer song this year. It feels fresh and it's original and the energy's really good. It feels like an uplifting and optimistic song – it puts you in a good mood, which is what I like from a summer anthem. I love the video, too. I saw one YouTube performance from him on *Le Grand Journal*. It felt like an alien had landed – which is always a good thing."

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Thurston Moore

Ramones Rockaway Beach

"Such an amazing summer song. It was all about New York, and it came out in 1976 – which was my first summer living like a penniless teenager in New York. All I did was hang out at CBGB and see the Ramones and Patti Smith and stuff. So that song was a real soundtrack to the time. I don't know why that was the greatest summer – I guess because I was at my most impressionable and I was just so enthralled by what was going on in the music scene. It was wonderful."

Sam Fryer
Palma Violets

▶**Sandy Denny & The Strawbs** How Everyone But Sam Was A Hypocrite

"It never gets old. It's similar to that Kinksy British ideal, it reminds me of British summer time."

James Murphy
LCD Soundsystem

▶**Jonathan Richman & The Modern Lovers**
That Summer Feeling

"It's a really summery, happy-sounding record, but it's actually one of the saddest songs I've ever heard. The chorus goes on about how '*that summer feeling's gonna haunt you*', it talks about all the great things about summer, but how nothing will compare to them."

Frankie Francis
Frankie & The Heartstrings

▶**Kool And The Gang**
Summer Madness

"It's the main sample in DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince's 'Summertime' hit. It oozes that sense of warm sunshine on your body, cold drink in hand and feet in the swimming pool."

Stuart Braithwaite
Mogwai

▶**Primal Scream**
Higher Than The Sun

"As you can probably imagine, my record collection is chock-a-block with summer anthems. I bought Primal Scream's 'Higher Than The Sun' the day it came out, though. Was I higher than the sun? Probably not... oh, actually I was, but I'm not going to talk about it. I was only 14. I went to see them around that time and they were outrageously good. That's probably the best single of the '90s."

Mark E Smith
The Fall

▶**The Velvet Underground**
White Light/White Heat

"I never go out in summer. Once April starts people go out like dogs, so I stay in. Summer is hell. There are a few songs that remind me how horrible summer is. Like The Velvet Underground's 'White Light/White Heat'. It says it all under three minutes."

Frank Turner

The Levellers What A Beautiful Day

"It's an archetypal summer song, isn't it? It's upbeat and foot-tappy. I grew up listening to The Levs, I've always been a huge fan – I don't give a fuck who thinks what about it. Levellers fans are generally quite defensive about other people's opinions about them! Fuck the world, I love The Levellers! Obviously I've gone on to tour with them and I've played their festival, Beautiful Days. I haven't covered this – The Levellers cover I've done is 'Julie', with the band and me rearranging the song, which was really one of my career pinnacles."

Huw 'Bunf' Bunford
Super Furry Animals

▶**Azealia Banks** 212

"It's brilliant. I like how in-your-face she is. I like her confidence and refreshing delivery. I came across it when the video went viral on YouTube and thought, 'Yep, I dig that, this is pretty good.' She doesn't give a shit, which you've got to respect. Hats off."

Andy Bell Ride

▶**Oasis** Live Forever

"That time when 'Live Forever' came out was just so exciting and the music enhanced it all so much. [Ride] were just splitting up, and my life was getting kinda empty that way. All we'd need was the Oasis tape and a stereo. We'd stick it on, then go out to a club where they'd be playing it too."

Rou Reynolds
Enter Shikari

▶**Oasis**
Round Are Way

"A mate's older brother made me a tape of Oasis' B-sides when I was about 12. I totally fell in love with it and played it until the tape was goosed. This track takes me back to those halcyon days down the park as a kid."

DJ Locksmith
Rudimental

▶**Earth, Wind & Fire**
September

"Ironically, 'September' by Earth, Wind & Fire is the perfect song for dancing in the hot weather. It makes no sense, but at the same time it feels like a really vibrant, funny, exciting summer tune. It just feels like it's uplifting and it's full of positivity."

Yeah Yeah Yeahs

▶**Shannon**
Let The Music Play

Karen O: "It's nostalgic for me, I used to rollerskate to it at the local rink. Now, as a grown woman, I still can't unlock the mysterious, maze-like groove."

Nick Zinner: "Once, when I was a little kid attempting to rollerskate to this song, a little plump boy – mistaking me for a girl – asked me to skate with him. It took until I was old enough to get into bars before I talked to anyone again."

Hugo White
The Maccabees
▶**Paul Buchanan**
Summer's On Its Way

"Paul Buchanan was a singer in The Blue Nile, and he did a solo record [2012's 'Mid Air'] with 'Summer's On Its Way'. It's a beautiful track and the fact it's got summer in the title ties it in quite well. The first line of it is: '*Summer's on its way/Like a millionaire/All the life you want/Living over there*'. I like the idea that you see summer coming and everything's going to be better, but it's not necessarily. It's just a piano and a vocal, so it's really simple, but you have to read between the lines."

Wayne Coyne
The Flaming Lips
▶**Nirvana**
Smells Like Teen Spirit

"I never knew what the fuck they were talking about in that song, but there's that line: '*With the lights out, it's less dangerous*'. It always seemed like there was a lot of violence and sex put together."

Du Blonde
▶**Frank Zappa**
Camarillo Brillo

"I fucking love that song, and I heard it for the first time right in the middle of summer. I must have been about 12 years old, and I was in the car with my dad and brother on a really hot day, and this track came on. My dad was playing us a load of Zappa stuff and he put 'Camarillo Brillo' on, and it was such an uplifting track. It's definitely one of his more commercial, easily digestible songs. From then on, it's always reminded me of driving around in the heat and experiencing this giant awakening, like, 'What *is* this disgusting filth I'm listening to? I love it!'"

Pete Wentz
Fall Out Boy
▶**UB40**
Red Red Wine

"I like 'Red Red Wine'. I mean, I like red wine too, but the song feels very summery to me, it always has. I remember being in the yard at my parents' house and when that song was on it felt like it would always be summer. In Chicago you get summer, but only for a couple of months!"

Madonna
The Human League
Don't You Want Me

"When I think about what a summer song is, at first, I think of something celebratory and up – but that's not quite really it, because I've dug some incredible summer songs that weren't. For example, 'Don't You Want Me' by The Human League reminds me of the days of Danceteria, New York. I'd spend all night on the dancefloor in some hideous outfit while all the skinny, fashionable girls threw drinks on me."

Yannis Philippakis
Foals
Souls Of Mischief 93 'Til Infinity

"It's a total hip-hop classic of that era with a real summery feel to it and it has the lyric '*Mahi Mahi, good vibrations/So many females, so much inspiration*', which is a pretty great couplet. The moment I hear it, it makes me wanna go down to the basketball court. They're from Oakland and it's got this West Coast, early-'90s feel, and I'm a sucker for that era of music. A lot of it's in the backing track and the samples they used, but that song more than any other makes me wanna grab a Solero and put a pair of shorts on."

Dave Grohl
▶**Cheap Trick**
Surrender

"I remember being on the bench in Ocean City, Maryland, drunk as hell, sitting on a lifeguard chair at three o'clock in the morning and singing that song at the top of my lungs. And realising that it actually felt good to sing and release like that."

Joel Amey
Wolf Alice
▶**Klaxons**
Golden Skans

"When I was 15, it was the summer of new rave and I remember going to Reading and seeing Klaxons on a small stage. 'Golden Skans' was the sound of that summer. It felt like the most important thing that had ever happened. They were one of those bands that just means so much when you can just focus on that band for six weeks before school starts again. Every summer, it's routine to find a new band so you can think, 'That's the summer I spent listening to that group 24/7'. I never listen to them any more, but it reminds me of the best time ever'. I've heard the new Swim Deep album – and that should be the soundtrack to everyone's summer this year."

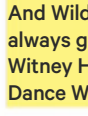
Bez
▶**Bob Marley**
Rebel Music (3 O'Clock Roadblock)

"It reminds me of being nine years old, walking around the school playground with my girlfriend and a ghetto blaster on my shoulder, blasting out Marley."

Brandon Flowers
▶**Whitney Houston**
I Wanna Dance With Somebody (Who Loves Me)

"There are songs that just remind me of being a kid. There was a place called Wet And Wild in Las Vegas and it was on the strip. It was a wonderful water park and the music that I heard when I was at Wet And Wild, for some reason if I hear it now I know that I heard it at Wet And Wild. One that sort of always gets me nostalgic is Witney Houston's 'I Wanna Dance With Somebody'."

Father John Misty
▶The American National Anthem



"It fills me with visions of summer cook-outs and mindless patriotism."

Nick Harmer
Death Cab For Cutie
▶**Led Zeppelin** Friends

"I discovered Led Zeppelin when I was 14 years old when I went to a friend's house who had a couple of older brothers. 'Friends' was a song that I really fell in love with early on. Being 14, it was like a coming-of-age sort of thing. It was always in the summer time that I picture sitting in this golden field and hearing that song."

Ghostpoet
▶**Howlin' Wolf**
Smokestack Lightnin'

"A great accompaniment for hot sweaty summer night shenanigans."

Austin Williams
Swim Deep
▶**Mafia Lights** West

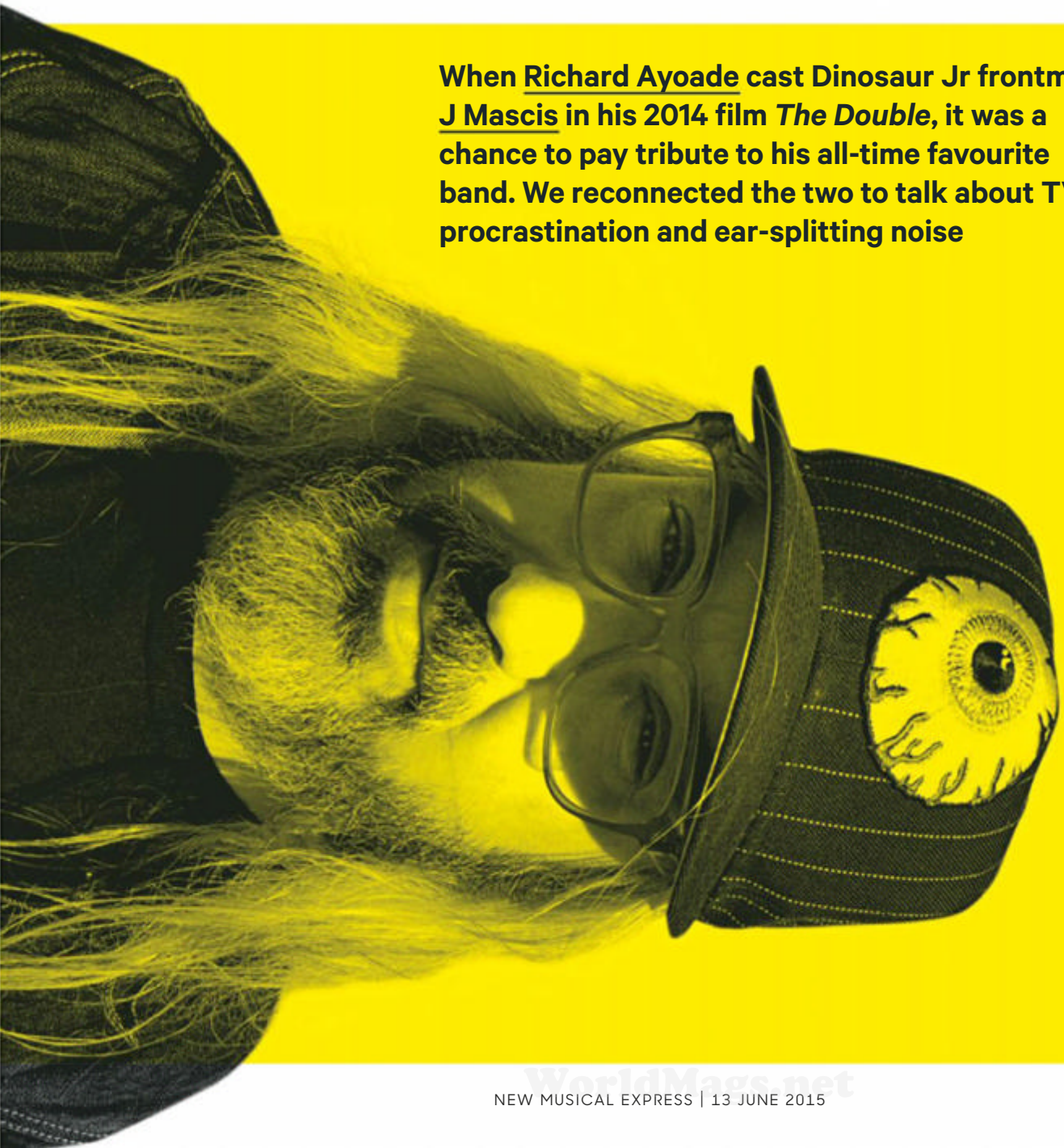
"Joel Amey's [pre-Wolf Alice band] Mafia Lights was the soundtrack to my tall migration to London, me skydiving in love, and the hungriest leap of my life. James of Mafia Lights is now in Swim Deep – I've stolen the Mafia magic."

FLORA HANITIJO, CORBIS, MATT SALACUSE, DEREK BREMNER, SOPHIE HARRIS-TAYLOR, JENN FIVE, AARON FARLEY, BRINSON + BANKS, JORDAN HUGHES

PIETER M VAN HATTEM, TOM OXLEY, AMY BRAMMAL, ED MILES, VICTOR FRANKOWSKI, ANDY WILLSHER, PAMELA LITTKY, DEAN CHALKLEY, DAN KENDALL

THE ODDBALL COUPLE

When Richard Ayoade cast Dinosaur Jr frontman J Mascis in his 2014 film *The Double*, it was a chance to pay tribute to his all-time favourite band. We reconnected the two to talk about TV, procrastination and ear-splitting noise



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Richard Ayoade has made the awkward interview into an art form, as Channel 4 News presenter Krishnan Guru-Murthy discovered when trying to probe him last October. J Mascis, founder member and frontman of Dinosaur Jr, is himself famed for being reticent and unresponsive to the press. Put them in a room together, and it turns out they get along famously. *NME* listened in as Mascis and superfan Ayoade chatted about Dinosaur Jr, the early days of Nirvana, filming *The Double* together and visiting Portland – just as if their reputations didn't precede them.

Richard Ayoade: "I think Dinosaur Jr's first album (1985's 'Dinosaur') was the first album I bought. I liked the cover. I also liked The Jesus And Mary Chain, and I read that they were doing a tour with Dinosaur Jr, My Bloody Valentine and Blur."
J Mascis: "The Rollercoaster Tour?"
R: "Yeah, it was the first show I ever went to. I went to see them at Brixton Academy [April 5, 1992] and I didn't know people would jump up and down. So I got to the front and thought, 'This is great.' Then everyone started jumping and someone's shoulder went into the bottom of my jaw and I spat out a tooth."
J: "I guess you didn't need that one anyway..."
R: "Yeah, well, it was in the middle of my mouth. I remember it being so loud that my trousers were flapping round my legs."
NME: What is it about Dinosaur Jr that is so special?
RA: "They're my favourite band – every part of it is great, there's nothing that isn't. You just feel everything is very carefully thought about, and then when you see them live there is so much improvisation. You know the way you see cats on a ledge and you think, 'I don't know if they're going to make it.' That's how I feel with most bands. I'm not sure if they're going to make it through the show. I never have that feeling watching Dinosaur Jr, though. You're just completely unaware that the song is even happening sometimes. It feels like someone who's able to talk without ever saying the word 'er', it feels impossible. Every decision he [J Mascis] makes seems to be the only good one and yet one that you could never have thought of yourself."
J: "Where were you living at the time you became a fan?"
R: "I was in Ipswich. Well, outside of Ipswich in a place called Martlesham Heath. Later on, I really liked [1991 album] 'Green Mind', and I was in France on a French exchange and I remember just listening to that, particularly the song 'Water', which is still my favourite song. I was quite antisocial and so I didn't go out so much. I stayed in my room, which slightly defeated the object of going on a French exchange. That was around the time Nirvana became huge. What was that period like?"
J: "It felt like it should happen and it did happen, so the world made sense for a moment. It all kind of went wrong, but for that moment it was cool."
R: "Was it true that you were ever going to drum with Nirvana?"
J: "Maybe on a seven-inch ['Sliver'], but then Dan Peters from Mudhoney did it. I think he [Kurt Cobain] wanted me to play guitar more. They had two guitar players at the time and I think he didn't like the other guitar player [Jason Everman] much."
NME: And when did you first meet J?
R: "I'd seen them at Alexandra Palace [supporting ↦

INTERVIEW: DAVID RENSHAW

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"THE FIRST SHOW I EVER WENT TO, I SPAT OUT A TOOTH"

RICHARD AYOADE

J Mascis and Richard Ayoade on the set of 2013 film *The Double*

The Flaming Lips in 2011], and I met J briefly then. My wife always jokes that it's the happiest I've ever looked, because I'm normally incredibly inexpressive. After that, I asked if he'd be in my film *The Double* [Mascis plays the role of 'Janitor' in Ayoade's 2013 film]. It was a very specific character who would be very memorable – the two main moments when you see him, right at the start and at the end, really needed to stick out. I thought there's no way he'll do it, but he did. And out of everyone he had the fewest takes. How was it for you?"

J: "I liked seeing how movies work. I think everyone wants to be in a movie or on TV. It's just funny to say you've been in a movie. I didn't even realise you were Saboo in *The Mighty Boosh* – you didn't have your glasses on [in the show], so I didn't realise it was you."

R: "How is it with everyone in the band now? I heard you're recording again..."

J: "Yeah, well, Lou [Barlow] moved back to this area [Portland, Oregon], so now we're a local band again, which is weird. We've had a few practices, which is cool."

R: "Does it feel like it becomes less dramatic as you get older?"

J: "It started with Lou getting less angry. He seemed to be angry for a long time and then he apologised and then someone convinced me it was a good idea to play with him again. "

R: "Are you able to get as excited by music as you were when you were younger?"

J: "No. Well, I can get excited, just not as excited."

R: "There are still bands that I can hear and go, 'Oh yeah, music can be quite good, can't it?' And sometimes its unexpected. Bill Ryder-Jones sent me some of his stuff, and I think Neon Waltz are great. I really like The Horrors, too. Do you think you're going to be doing a new record maybe?"

J: "Yeah, it could happen, we're trying to plan for it, but it's hard to plan things. Hopefully, it will come together. What have you been doing?"

R: "A good word for it is drifting. I'm trying to not leave the house too much, but I'm writing. It always seems like nothing when you're writing, people just say, 'Oh, so you went shopping?' You have to say, 'Here's the thing – here's the proof I wasn't just staring into space.'"

J: "When I'm writing I watch TV, which helps. I'm just programmed from school to do the least amount possible and at the last minute. I'm running out of things to watch – any suggestions?"

R: "*The Prisoner*?"

J: "That sounds old. I bought the whole series of *Batman*. I'm just trying to get my kid to get into it."

***NME*:** Would you like to work together again in the future, perhaps? Maybe an episode of [Ayoade's C4 travel show] *Travel Man*?

J: "I'm ready."

R: "We'll do it. Let's do it in Portland." ■

FREAKY SCENES

Richard Ayoade's ultimate Dinosaur Jr mixtape

▶*Watch The Corners* I Bet On Sky 2012 ▶*Your Weather* Farm 2009
▶*Back To Your Heart* Beyond 2007 ▶*Sure Not Over You* Hand It Over 1997 ▶*I Don't Think So* Without A Sound 1994
▶*Out There* Where You Been 1993 ▶*Water* Green Mind 1991
▶*Whatever's Cool With Me* (single) 1991 ▶*Freak Scene* Bug 1988
▶*The Lung* You're Living All Over Me 1987
▶*Forget The Swan* Dinosaur 1985

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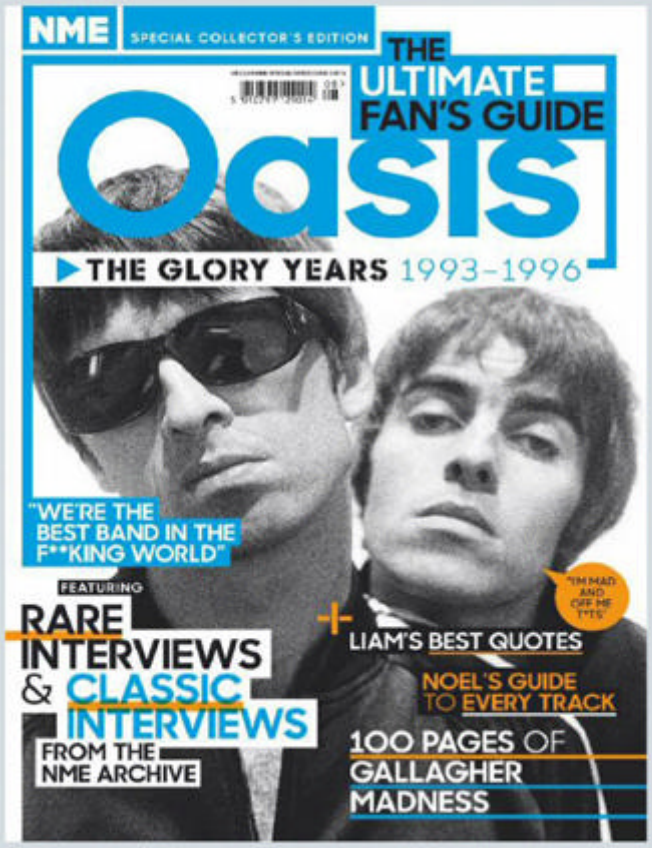

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BLONDES
HAVE MORE FUN

After a creative crisis, Beth Jeans Houghton ditched her band The Hooves Of Destiny and invented a whole new persona. So who is Du Blonde, asks Tom Ellen, and what does she want?

PHOTO: SOPHIE HARRIS TAYLOR

A couple of years back, Beth Jeans Houghton was driving through the Mojave Desert at midnight. Sat beside her in the hired car was Future Islands frontman Samuel T Herring. The pair were a hundred miles from anywhere, roaring across featureless highway and discussing potential collaborations, when their headlights picked out something extremely unsettling.

"Sam suddenly shrieked and slammed his foot on the brake," Houghton recalls. "He was like, 'Did you see that?! There was this tall... *thing* in a black cloak, waving its hands around!' I'm thinking, 'Oh my God, is he on drugs?' He'd been driving for hours. I was really freaked out, but we turned back to have a look, and suddenly this cloaked figure with bright white hands was *there*, at my side of the car, doing this..." She curls and uncurls all 10 fingers, slowly. "It was freezing outside, nothing around for miles, and I swear this person was 8ft tall. We just screamed and drove off. Then, at the next exit, we saw a sign for 'Herring Road', and the one after, 'Houghton Road'. Seriously. I was like, 'This is the day we die...'"

Thankfully, far from signalling her demise, this troubling incident came right at the beginning of Houghton's 'rebirth'. She returned from the Mojave to overhaul the twee, folksy image she'd spent the last few years cultivating, and rebrand herself as Du Blonde – a snarling, strutting rock goddess. With a little help from guest vocalist Herring and producer (and Bad Seed) Jim Sclavunos, she set about recording her new album 'Welcome Back To Milk' – a dark, strange, shimmering glam-punk offering, utterly unlike anything she's created previously.

"I wanted to be more aggressive, more honest, more true to myself," she shrugs. "I just wanted to do something people wouldn't expect."

While it's tempting to assume that the Mojave's lanky spectres and sentient road signs were entirely responsible for this dramatic volte-face, that's not really the case. As we settle down in the corner of a sun-dappled north London pub, the 25-year-old explains that the seeds were actually planted as far back as summer 2012, when she was touring Europe with her then-group, The Hooves Of Destiny.

The Hooves, for the uninitiated, were a picnic-friendly psych-folk outfit, combining twiddly, Vampire Weekend guitars with quirky non sequitur lyrics about "skinny bone trees" and "sweet tooth birds". Houghton, who'd grown up in Newcastle listening to Led Zeppelin and '70s punk, was starting to feel that the tousle-haired cupcake world she'd stumbled into wasn't really where she belonged.

"Beth Jeans Houghton [the artist] had become something so far from the core of me," she recalls. "I've never felt very girly or feminine, but people were putting me in that box, which I found difficult." Difficult was upgraded to devastating after a gig in Zurich, where Houghton suffered a complete mental collapse.

"I'd had death anxiety for a week," she says. "I felt like my brain was disintegrating. I couldn't even form the words to tell my tour manager, 'You need to call an ambulance.' I honestly thought I was dying."

She promptly quit alcohol, sugar and – despite having a new album in the bag – her band. Does she lament the fact that there's a Hooves record out there that may never see light of day?

"Not really. It wasn't a bad record at all, and it was more in the direction of what I'm doing now. But it was still too saccharine, I think."

She relocated to LA, where, aside from sharing a bed with Deap Vally's Lindsey Troy for a month ("We mainly stayed up watching that YouTube video of the monkey wanking off the toad"), she sought to reconnect with the kind of coarse, combative music she first fell in love with.

"I was listening to a lot of American hardcore," she explains. "That got me to a place where I was like, 'Yeah, fuck you all.' That music is a good tool for figuring out who you are."

Another good tool, it seems, was the V&A's 'David Bowie Is...' exhibition: "I was stood there, in front of his life's work, thinking, 'This is someone who went through so many changes and fulfilled all his creative desires, even when people told him he shouldn't.' So, it was almost like the decision [to change] was made for me right there. I didn't question it."

Reinvention has always been part of rock'n'roll, whether it's major, Tom Waits-style musical gearshifts, or just Mumford & Sons swapping their herringbone tweed for black leather. But, Bowie aside, most artists don't feel the need for a total rebrand just because they've tweaked their sound or bought a new jacket.

"The name change just made sense of it all," she explains. "It makes it totally clear this is a different project. Jim [Sclavunos] said the same thing about Grinderman, actually. They were coming up with darker, heavier music that didn't quite fit into The Bad Seeds' realm, so it's like, 'Let's put a new name on it.' I guess Du Blonde gives me the chance to be fully myself, to act out all my rage and aggression."

'Welcome Back To Milk' (named for Houghton's discovery that an extra milky latte can successfully conquer constipation) is very much formed of rage, aggression and freedom. It's dirty, raw, primal stuff; all rumbling bass and doomy, Cramps-esque guitar twangs, over which Houghton vents melodically on death, pain and sex. The chorus of 'Young Entertainment' finds her demanding, "*What is it like to fuck your mistress with her hands tied*?", which is about as far from the Hooves' wide-eyed whimsy as it's possible to get. "The mixer's daughter was having her 10th birthday party in the next room while we recorded that," she chuckles. "Imagine hearing that line through the wall while you're trying to watch *Frozen*..."

"I WANTED TO BE MORE AGGRESSIVE, MORE HONEST"

The album's no-holds-barred content and cover – which depicts a near-naked Houghton sporting a makeshift 'merkin' – are hardly surprising when you consider her touchstones while writing it. One of the hardcore punk artists she was particularly immersed in during her Du Blonde transition was GG Allin – the late, perma-blood-spattered lunatic whose live shows largely involved him stripping off and flinging his own faeces about.

"I'm not saying I want to be *quite* that extreme onstage," she laughs. "But I'd like the freedom to be able to do it if I chose to. And I think it's more difficult for a girl, because there are certain standards the public hold women to in terms of what's acceptable. GG Allin did his thing, and it was like, 'It's art, he's being himself', but Miley Cyrus goes onstage wearing a bikini and suddenly she's an 'attention seeker'. Maybe that *is* her being herself, y'know?"

We can't speak for Miley, but Du Blonde is *definitely* Houghton being herself. Part of the reason 'Welcome Back To Milk' is such an exhilarating listen is that it really does sound like someone being set free; busting out of nu-folk prison to wreak joyous, three-chord chaos on the world.

"I did used to feel guilty for wanting things to be completely *mine* when I was in the band," she admits. "I felt selfish. But then I got to the point of thinking, 'If I'm going to continue to [make music] and stay sane, I have to do it exactly how I want.' And I'm glad I did, because, really... I'm so much happier now." ■

CH-CH-CHANGES

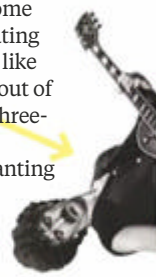
Du Blonde's favourite musical reinventions

David Bowie
"My favourite [of all his personas] was Ziggy Stardust. I loved his ability to be confident and feminine in a way that wasn't jarring and didn't seem attention-grabbing at all."

Marc Bolan
"Bolan going electric was a big thing for me... A lot of people didn't agree with it at the time, but I think it was one of the best decisions he ever made."

Neil Young
"Whether or not you like the stuff he did later in his career, you can't deny it's an admirable thing to reject that pressure about potential loss of sales and just go off in a completely different direction."

Frank Zappa
"He reinvented himself so many times, just by all the different genres he went into. That's what I want from my career, the freedom to do that."



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Reviews

THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY BEN HOMEWOOD

NME ALBUM OF THE WEEK

A$AP Rocky
At.Long.Last.A$AP

Hedonistic and vain, but also touched by real-life tragedy, the Harlem rapper's second album is thrillingly focused

What with Kanye's messianic ravings and Kendrick Lamar taking himself to church, hip-hop's been having an hallelujah moment of late. Now A$AP Rocky is back with 'At.Long.Last.A$AP' – known as 'ALLA' to its friends – a second studio album its creator intends to signal the "return of the god MC".

But what would the gospel according to Rakim Mayers look like, anyway? After all, this is a man whose alleged sexual rap sheet (Lana Del Rey? Iggy Azalea?) would have Jay off *The Inbetweeners* raising a brow of suspicion. A man so vain, his most widely publicised beef to date was with a fashion label.

The answer lies somewhere between the lines of 'ALLA'. Opener 'Holy Ghost', with a widescreen production turn from that seasoned vet of major-label melancholy, Danger Mouse, finds Rocky complaining that "*the game is full of slaves and they mostly rappers*" – surprising, from an MC who once jokily promised to mow down "*conscious*" rappers with his machine gun.

But 'ALLA' is mired in real-life tragedy, too. In January this year, Rocky lost his friend and mentor, A$AP Yams, who was instrumental in minting his chopped-and-screwed style of hedonistic rhymes set to tastefully twisted beats, to a fatal drug overdose. Yams' ghost is felt in tracks like 'Canal St', which flips from rote misogynistic fare about getting head under the office desk to a jolting line about how "*your favourite rappers' corpses couldn't measure my importance*" – something on your mind, Rock? – and 'JD', which sees the rapper compare himself to tragic Hollywood icon James Dean. 'Jukebox Joints', instantly recognisable as Yeezy's handiwork, finds Rocky unrepentantly

proclaiming "*I'll be damned if I die sober*" before sneaking in a disclaimer: "*When my death calls/I hope the Lord accepts collect calls*".

Such moments reveal a thoughtful side to Rocky that sadly fails to show itself elsewhere ('Better Things'' tawdry attack on Rita Ora, of all people, is pathetic and not worth reprinting here). But it's beats that have made Rocky the big-ticket draw he is today, and on that front 'ALLA' doesn't disappoint. Trippy and soulful, the absence of A-grade production talent like Clams Casino and Noah Shebib is barely felt: 'Canal St' is a masterclass in affecting minimalism, 'Excuse Me' makes terrifically surreal use of a Platters sample, and 'Electric Bodies' is a class-A ballers' anthem with an uncredited cameo that sounds awfully like Tame Impala's Kevin Parker. 'L$D', a woozy ode to psychedelics with just a hint of sadness buried beneath the surface, does a supremely stylish job of reinventing Rocky as an R&B crooner.

Inevitably, the record suffers from being overlong, and the galaxy of guest spots is a mixed blessing at best (Kanye and MIA phone in their verses, Future and Lil Wayne steal the show). But, playground misogyny aside, 'ALLA' is a thrillingly focused follow-up that betrays its anxieties even as it mostly makes do with extolling the virtues of vice. ■ ALEX DENNEY

8

ROCK STAR

Three examples of our host with the boasts paying tribute to the man in the mirror...

"I swear we gon' have drama if you touch my tailored garments" – 'Excuse Me'

Ever the designer drama queen, Rocky laughs in the face of your shit off-the-peg Marks & Sparks suit.

"My mind is out in orbits, plus my ego got endorsements" – 'Canal St'

The self-described pretty boy's ego is so colossal, advertisers are falling over themselves to write blank cheques on its behalf. Which is kind of meta when you think about it.

"Did Azaleas from Australia, trips to Australia/Cinderellas under my umbrella for different weather/ Ella, ella, ay, just play it like I didn't tell ya" – 'Jukebox Joints'

Rocky's fling with Iggy Azalea is public knowledge, but is he kiss-and-telling on another A-lister here? Who says chivalry is dead?

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** Out now ▶**LABEL** RCA ▶**PRODUCERS** Danger Mouse, Mark Ronson, Kanye West et al ▶**LENGTH** 66.15 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Holy Ghost (feat. Joe Fox) ▶2. Canal St (feat. Bones) ▶3. Fine Whine (feat. MIA, Future & Joe Fox) ▶4. L$D ▶5. Excuse Me ▶6. JD ▶7. Lord Pretty Flacko Jodye 2 ▶8. Electric Body (feat. Schoolboy Q) ▶9. Jukebox Joints (feat. Kanye West & Joe Fox) ▶10. Max B (feat. Joe Fox) ▶11. Pharsyde (feat. Joe Fox) ▶12. Wavybone (feat. Juicy J & UGK) ▶13. Westside Highway (feat. James Fauntleroy) ▶14. Better Things ▶15. M'$ (feat. Lil Wayne) ▶16. Dreams (interlude) ▶17. Everyday (feat. Rod Stewart & Miguel) ▶18. Back Home (feat. Mos Def, Acyde & Yams)

MORE ALBUMS

The Orb
Moonbuilding 2703 AD
Kompakt

This 13th studio album from The Orb sits largely on the side of their catalogue that favours deep, sprawling ambience over house-y hooks. Based around the outlandish idea of mankind one day discovering its roots on solar moons, the record is made up of four nine-minute-plus epics that waft into view, all dub basslines, ambient synth washes and well-chosen samples. The exception is the title track, a skanking, lurching take on ambient hip-hop that takes a J Dilla-like beat to funky, astral heights. It's brilliant, fresh and original, with few precedents in the duo's catalogue. The rest sounds a little Orb-by-numbers in comparison: full of masterful control of mood but too unfocused to really raise the temperature. ■ BEN CARDEW

6

Gwilym Gold
A Paradise Brille

Since Gwilym Gold's debut was so conceptually driven – 2012's 'Tender Metal' was released in a new format, Bronze, which meant the songs were structurally different on every play - it's refreshing that his second is so subtle. Contributions from melodic dubsteppers Darkstar and Hyetal, playful electronicist Bullion and classical composer Nico Muhly are subsumed into a breath-holdingly delicate whole, the former Golden Silvers man's voice charged but tentative, as glitchy beats flutter and soft piano pulses and strings swell slowly. It's done with such restraint that what changes of tone there are, such as on the more meaty, beaty 'Triumph' or the lushly sensual 'Flex', are all the more striking. ■ EMILY MACKAY

7

Leon Bridges
Coming Home

Texan soul man cooks up a retro-R&B classic with two members of White Denim

'Coming Home' exists in a satin-swathed timewarp that takes you back 55 years. Texan singer Leon Bridges' debt to the warmth of soul pioneer Sam Cooke is evident in every tune on a debut album where even the stylish artwork acts as an unreconstructed envoy to a 1960 dependent on daiquiris and dinner dances. Produced by White Denim members Josh Block and Austin Jenkins – Jenkins met former busboy Bridges in a Fort Worth dive bar last year and the pair bonded over vintage jeans – the album boasts a host of local session stars. The vibrant 'Shine' is filled with languid horns and sweet doo-wop backing vocals. Rolling ragtime piano ('Flowers') and hip-shaking melody ('Better Man') pick up the pace and there's bluesy sass in the shape of the upbeat 'Twistin And Groovin'. But it's the contemplative 'River' that assures the 25-year-old Bridges' future, stripping everything back to stunning effect and letting his heartfelt vocals take centre stage. ■ LEONIE COOPER

8

▶THE DETAILS

▶**LABEL** Columbia Records ▶**RELEASE DATE** June 22 ▶**PRODUCERS** Austin Jenkins, Josh Block ▶**LENGTH** 34.14 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Coming Home ▶2. Better Man ▶3. Brown Skin Girl ▶4. Smooth Sailin ▶5. Shine ▶6. Lisa Sawyer ▶7. Flowers ▶8. Pull Away ▶9. Twistin And Groovin' ▶10. River ▶**BEST TRACK** Better Man

Fist City
Everything Is A Mess
Transgressive

'Everything Is A Mess' starts with 20 seconds of ambient noise before exploding into a song called 'Fuck Cops'. Both are laudable actions, but red herrings in regard to the overall vibe of Calgary punk quartet Fist City's second album. The formless interludes – six in total – don't detract from the bursts of earbleeding tunefulness. 'Let's Rip' sounds like The Cure through a pop-punk filter. 'Hey Little Sister' and 'Rats' do a similar job on Sonic Youth, aided by Evan Van Reekum's cavernous guitar. This is a worthy companion for Joanna Gruesome's last album: Fist City, too, blur the lines between indie and punk, and have a knack for hooks. ■ NOEL GARDNER

7

Reviews

Meg Baird
Don't Weigh Down The Light Wichita

Don't judge a book by its cover? You'd swear the sleeve art for Meg Baird's third album is willing you to do just that by looking like a callback to Joni Mitchell's 'Blue'. Baird may lean variously on folk, jazz and early-'70s Laurel Canyon fare, but 'Don't Weigh Down The Light' belies her San Francisco-via-Philadelphia citizenship by sounding like a relic of psychedelic Britain. Delicate finger-picking nuzzles fuzzy guitar solos like prime Pentangle ('Back To You'), while Baird's voice, high and crystalline, sounds as if it's coming from deep in a forest ('Stars Unwinding'). Espers, the rockier duo with whom she made her name, seem to be on constant hiatus, but this more than suffices. **7**

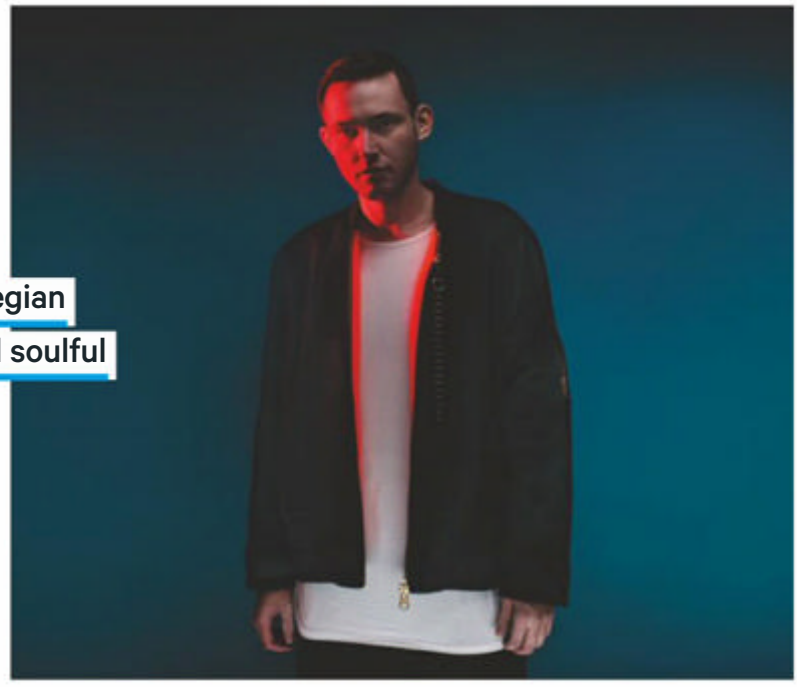
■ NOEL GARDNER

Son Lux
Bones Glassnote

For his fourth album, Denver-born musician Ryan Lott has bolstered the Son Lux line-up with Rafiq Bhatia (guitar) and Ian Chang (drums). There's no marked difference to his glitchy but powerful electronica, although Bhatia's billing as 'composer' hints at 'Bones'' alternate life as an orchestral suite. From the tuning up on 'Breathe In' to the lyrics about striving for freedom on the distorted electro-pop of 'Change Is Everything' and dubstep gospel of 'Now I Want', the record is as much a piece as an album. By the time Lott's shaky-Bowie vocals give way to slicing strings on 'Breathe Out', 'Bones' has become a future-facsimile of Polish composer Henryk Górecki's classical opus 'Symphony Of Sorrowful Songs'. Pretentious, yes, but wonderful. **8**

■ MATTHEW HORTON

Hudson Mohawke Lantern



Kanye's favourite Glaswegian producer gets sweet and soulful on his second album

On his second album, Hudson Mohawke is looking at a flashing button that reads 'CASH OUT'. When he dropped his debut, 'Butter', on Warp back in 2009, Ross Birchard was an absurdly fresh-faced Glasgow beatmaker with a ton of promise and a squiggly, neon-bright production style all of his own. Six years on, he's been nabbed as in-house producer for Kanye West's GOOD Music, smashed countless dancefloors with Montreal producer Lunice as TNGHT, and saw everyone from Drake to Pusha T pull up his beats to spit on. If he wants it, hip-hop is his.

If 'Lantern' doesn't lay its hands on the crown jewels, you suspect it's more by design than accident. After all, any record of which you can say "features a guest appearance by Antony Hegarty" is not going for swagged-out thug anthems. Instead, these 14 tracks find Birchard reaffirming his love for a sweeter, more feminine sound – a euphoric wash of R&B, soul and '90s hip-hop that's bright of melody and all fuzzy round the edges.

His best tricks are tracks that begin with the whiff of homage, then fire off curveballs. Take 'Ryderz'. A nod to Jay Z producer Just Blaze, it nabs its vocal and strings from an obscure 1973 soul track, DJ Rogers' 'Watch Out For The Riders'. But just when you're acclimatised, Birchard starts fucking with the formula, dunking the vocal at the bottom of a swimming pool and slamming you round the temples with cartoonish snares and kicks.

Guest spots veer towards soulful. Ruckazoid – signed to DJ Shadow's Liquid Amber – kisses his teeth at the haters on the Disney uplift of 'Warriors', while R&B crooner Miguel is your guide through the smeary synths of 'Deepspace'. 'Indian Steps' is a sensitive fit to Antony Hegarty's lugubrious countertenor. "*Swim up from the deep/Dance in a field of weakness*", sings Hegarty, as Birchard's drums pulse like a lovestruck heartbeat.

Elsewhere, 'Lantern' zigzags friskily. There's movie-montage minimalism ('Kettles'), wonky percussion workouts ('Lil Djembe'), and on 'Shadows', the sort of pop kitsch PC Music have made their own. If you're expecting some cast-iron statement, 'Lantern' is not that: it's too playful, too idiosyncratic. As a glimpse of the peculiar predilections of Ross Birchard, though, it's a giddy joy. **7**

■ LOUIS PATTISON

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** June 15 ▶**LABEL** Warp ▶**PRODUCER** Hudson Mohawke **LENGTH** 45:17 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Lantern ▶2. Very First Breath (feat. Irfane) ▶3. Ryderz ▶4. Warriors (feat. Ruckazoid and Devaeux) ▶5. Kettles ▶6. Scud Books ▶7. Indian Steps (feat. Antony) ▶8. Lil Djembe ▶9. Deepspace (feat. Miguel) ▶10. Shadows ▶11. Resistance (feat. Jhené Aiko) ▶12. Portrait Of Luci ▶13. System ▶14. Brand New World ▶**BEST TRACK** Ryderz

Michael Rault
Living Daylight
Burger Records

In the shadows of Mac DeMarco and Sean Nicholas Savage lurks Michael Rault, another stubbly, weirdo pop songwriter from Edmonton, Canada. Rault's early releases – still available on Bandcamp – are glossier than 'Living Daylight', his debut for California's Burger Records. That said, his Todd Rundgren and T Rex influences are polished into something shinier than, say, Foxygen have ever managed. And there lies the problem: Rault's straightforwardness is off-putting. There's nothing *wrong* with sun-fried love song 'Dancing With Tears In My Eyes' or fuzzy-riffing toe-tapper 'Suckcess', but the delivery lacks edge. Rault needs to delve deeper into the weirdness lurking beneath this harmlessly enjoyable record. **6**

■ BEN HOMEWOOD

The Membranes
Dark Matter/Dark Energy
Cherry Red

Fronted by music critic John Robb, Blackpool's Membranes shot through the '80s underground in a blaze of punk energy. While Robb's other band Goldblade are still active, The Membranes' first album in 26 years is an extraordinary comeback. Smashing together dub basslines, post-punk grind and cosmic soundscapes, 'Dark Matter/Dark Energy' muses on mortality and the universe, and was inspired by a conversation between Robb and physicist Joe Incandela. Often brutal in approach, the gut-punch of 'Space Junk' and 'Do The Supernova' would frighten off any alien. A recording of Incandela talking science plays on the reverberating 'The Multiverse Suite', while 'The Hum Of The Universe' has Robb concluding: "*All God's flesh turns to rust*". **7**

■ STUART HUGGETT

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Reviews

Oscar
Beautiful Words EP Wichita

"*You try to forget me but you can't*", croons north Londoner Oscar Scheller on 'Forget Me Not'. The lyric might be a warning to someone messing around with the 23-year-old's heart, but it can also be neatly applied to his sugar-coated lo-fi pop. Recorded in his bedroom, this seven-track debut EP has a subtle layer of melancholy and is rich in immediate melodies and collages of crunching drum machines and string samples. The lilting 'Grow Up' has Oscar coming on like Peter Pan ("*I just wanna be young forever*"), and 'Told Me So' mixes an angry bassline with dazed guitars as the heartbroken singer sighs, "*Someone told me so/You don't love me at all*". Just you try and forget him.

8

■ RHIAN DALY

Jaako Eino Kalevi
Jaako Eino Kalevi Weird World

A former tram driver from Finland, Jaako Eino Kalevi has toured heavily since releasing debut EP 'Dreamzone' in 2013. Shortly after recording this debut for Domino imprint Weird World, the singer/producer upped sticks to Berlin, but his sound has barely moved on from the exploratory disco-funk he made in his Helsinki bedroom. This is no bad thing: at its best 'Jaako Eino Kalevi' conjures the slinkier moments of Ariel Pink's 2010 breakthrough 'Before Today'. 'Mind Like Muscle' shifts from funk chug to plinking R&B, and 'Night At The Field' wriggles on a delicious bassline. War On Drugs engineer Nicolas Vernhes smoothes 'Don't Ask Me Why' and 'Room' into two of Kalevi's best songs yet, but the whole thing bathes in glorious groove.

7

■ BEN HOMEWOOD

Desaparecidos
Payola Epitaph

With reunited emo titans like American Football and The Get Up Kids touring, it was only a matter of time before Bright Eyes leader Conor Oberst got his own hypersensitive punk band back together. Oberst's acclaimed Americana outfit may have overshadowed Desaparecidos, but 'Payola' picks up right where 2002's politically charged debut 'Read Music/Speak Spanish' left off. Oberst growls emphatically through social-inequality rant 'The Left Is Right' and 'City On The Hill' bounces along with more woahs than US punk roadshow the Warped Tour. The pop-punk politicising does get exhausting over 14 fiercely energetic, relentlessly right-on tracks, but even after a decade as a folk star, Oberst still gives the other grown-up emo kids a run for their money.

7

■ ROBERT COOKE

Active Child
Mercy Vagrant

When Pat Grossi sang in the Philadelphia Boys Choir as a child, his knees used to knock before a solo. There was fragility on his first album as Active Child, 2011's 'You Are All I See', but this follow-up strips away vocal effects, and to some extent pop structure, to reveal his operatic voice and harp parts. 'Darling' is the furthest removed from the synthetic dubbiness of the 32-year-old's previous work, and when he does play with effects and faster rhythms, as on 'Mercy' and 'Stranger', the result is akin to something James Blake might have cooked up for his 2011 debut. But 'Mercy' is most interesting when Grossi mixes vulnerability with flamboyance, moving the likes of 'Lazarus' into Perfume Genius territory.

6

■ BEN HOMEWOOD

FFS
FFS

Arch indie groove meets operatic West Coast disco as Franz Ferdinand and Sparks finally get their freak on

There's a moment about six minutes into 'FFS' high point 'Collaborations Don't Work' when you can actually hear art rock eat itself. Franz Ferdinand's Alex Kapranos opens the track solo on an acoustic, singing "*Collaborations don't work, I'm gonna do it all by myself*". Then, after the whole thing billows into a jazz/synthpop operetta dissecting the pitfalls that characterise the average joint rock venture, he swaps barbed operatic swipes with Sparks' Russell Mael ("*I don't need your patronising/I don't need your agonising*") and the two bands finally come together for a gloriously unified romp through the chorus. It's the ultimate proof of the worth of collabs, and it would make Van McCann's brain explode.

Not all of 'FFS' – a union of pop brainiacs Franz Ferdinand and Sparks 10 years in the making – merges the Glaswegians' arch indie groove and the LA disco duo's Gilbert & Sullivan foolishness quite as beautifully, but much of it comes close. Throwing references to Sartre, Warhol and US architect Frank Lloyd Wright into songs about shagging Harlem police officers' wives (the sizzling 'Police Encounters'), punching above your romantic weight ('Johnny Delusional') and how everyone should really just piss off (jubilant singalong 'Piss Off'), Franz's pop impetus complements Sparks' electronic quaintness near-perfectly throughout. Lyrically, they seem to be locked in a ferocious battle of wit. Alex's 'Call Girl' casts him as a lovelorn suitor begging "*Why don't you call, girl?*" while sidestepping the title's prostitution connotations. Russell's urgent 'Dictator's Son' traces the story of an heir to a Middle Eastern dictatorship visiting LA and losing himself in western consumerism and celebrity culture – "*I'm into Hugo Boss*", he decides, "*Jordan's shoes...*"

After 'So Desu Ne' crackles past on a sea of skronky disco synths, things take a turn for the trite and formulaic on 'The Lovecats'-y 'The Man Without A Tan' and 'Thing I Won't Get' – a forlornly innocuous list of things out of the physical and mental reach of even these culture vultures. But the Nick Cave-ish gothic thump of 'The Power Couple' halts the slide. When two such spiky forms collide you can't expect everything to click, but 'FFS' is still a wonder of gelling idiosyncrasies.

7

■ MARK BEAUMONT

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** Out now ▶**LABEL** Domino ▶**PRODUCER** John Congleton ▶**LENGTH** 47:07 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Johnny Delusional ▶2. Call Girl ▶3. Dictator's Son ▶4. Little Guy From The Suburbs ▶5. Police Encounters ▶6. Save Me From Myself ▶7. So Desu Ne ▶8. The Man Without A Tan ▶9. Thing I Won't Get ▶10. The Power Couple ▶11. Collaborations Don't Work ▶12. Piss Off ▶**BEST TRACK** Collaborations Don't Work

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FILM

Entourage

The HBO series' big-screen revival features cameos from Pharrell and Piers Morgan but omits the laughs

For 96 episodes between 2004 and 2011, *Entourage* both sent up and celebrated modern-day Hollywood. The Emmy and Golden Globe-winning show followed the adventures of fictional movie star Vincent Chase (Adrian Grenier), his posse of hangers-on and his abrasive agent Ari Gold (Jeremy Piven). It made director Doug Ellin and his cast famous and often felt insightful, partly because one of its executive producers, Mark Wahlberg, was a real-life movie star. But quality control dipped steadily in later seasons, and it's hard not to approach this big-screen spin-off without thinking 'why bother?'

Ellin has described it as "*Entourage* on steroids", and superficially, that's an accurate assessment of a bombastically glamorous film packed with tanned hotties, LA mansions and luxury cars. In the opening scene, Vincent Chase and his old buddies Eric (Kevin Connolly), Turtle (Jerry Ferrara) and Drama (Kevin Dillon) party hard on a yacht with bikini-clad beauties including Emily Ratajkowski, the model/actress from Robin Thicke's controversial 'Blurred Lines' video.

The TV series was known for its ability to attract A-list guest stars and the film maintains this gold standard, with Pharrell Williams, Calvin Harris, Liam Neeson, Jessica Alba and Piers Morgan all appearing briefly and knowingly as themselves. Morgan's extended cameo is especially memorable, as he gamely mocks his reputation for being a bit of a weasel.

▶DIRECTOR Doug Ellin
▶RELEASE DATE June 19

Sadly, though, Ellin fails to amp up the show's comedy or drama. The thin plot follows Chase as he persuades Gold to give him $100 million to film a dystopian update of *The Strange Case Of Dr Jekyll And Mr Hyde*. Though this film-within-a-film looks pretty incoherent when we're shown its opening scene, Gold declares it a masterpiece, so we're presumably meant to feel devastated when a super-rich Texan investor (Billy Bob Thornton) threatens to withhold the funds necessary to get it finished. It's supposed to be Chase's labour of love, but we never actually see him working on it, or even getting especially upset when its future is jeopardised, so Ellin's film fails to sustain any real dramatic tension for much of its 104-minute running time.

This wouldn't matter so much if the script contained a few more laughs. Piven's egotistical movie mogul remains *Entourage's* most compelling character, but he's hamstrung by sub-Gordon Gekko lines like "I don't worry, I just win" and a slightly uncomfortable sub-plot in which camp assistant Lloyd (Rex Lee) keeps asking Gold to give him away at his wedding, only to be greeted with witless anti-gay gags. Though Ellin at least keeps the friendships at the heart of *Entourage* intact, his film comes off only as a lumpen update of a stylish TV series. ■ NICK LEVINE

5

DVD

Black Rebel Motorcycle Club Live In Paris

Over nearly 15 years, Black Rebel Motorcycle Club have built a large, tenacious fanbase. In February 2014, they filled the enormous Theatre Trianon in Paris for an epic two-hour concert, a film of which forms the heart of this deluxe three-disc package. But only a staunch BRMC fan could really enjoy it. The gig (also presented in CD form) is pointlessly jazzed up with imitation 'VHS static' FX by London director Bartleberry Logan. Any hope that Australian photographer Yana Amur's accompanying 53-minute documentary *33.3%* might offer insight into what makes the quartet tick is shot down in a moody, monochrome blaze. "I try to be a blank canvas as much as possible," muses guitarist Peter Hayes in one scene. Regrettably, he's succeeded here. ■ NOEL GARDNER

5

CINEMA

Slow West

Former Beta Band keyboardist John Maclean makes his directorial debut with this impressive western, which features an end-credits theme composed by his brother David's band, Django Django. The slow-burning story follows Irish outlaw Silas (Michael Fassbender) as he helps naive young Scotsman Jay (Kodi Smit-McPhee) trek on horseback across America in pursuit of his troubled childhood sweetheart Rose (South African actress Caren Pistorius). Maclean's depiction of 19th-century Colorado as a brutally beautiful place populated by pistol-carrying bounty hunters is increasingly gripping, and with flashes of surreal humour, the writer-director offers a fresh and distinctive take on a classic genre. ■ NICK LEVINE

8

CINEMA

San Andreas

In this expensive disaster flick from director Brad Peyton, California is hit by two earthquakes measuring 9.1 and 9.6 on the Richter Scale, followed by a tsunami. Seismologists have already exposed the film's implausibility, noting that it's virtually impossible for the real-life San Andreas fault to create tremors of this magnitude, but you won't need expert knowledge to spot its other flaws. Peyton's shots of crumbling CGI skyscrapers are spectacular but repetitive, and the script is uneven and cheesy. When rescue helicopter pilot Ray (Dwayne Johnson, aka The Rock) and his estranged wife (Carla Gugino) parachute into a baseball stadium, he delivers the groan-inducing line, "It's been a while since I got you to second base." ■ NICK LEVINE

3

CINEMA

The Burning

Pablo Fendrik's latest film follows the Danish-made *Salvation* and the Patagonian mind-bender *Jauja* into British cinemas, suggesting the non-conformist western has become a truly global form. In an impoverished and isolated enclave in present-day Argentina, a barefoot stranger (Gael García Bernal) arrives at a farm just before a team of murderous land-grabbers turns up to force the owner to sign away the land. Hunters become hunted as action shifts to the rainforest. Throughout it all, a lone jaguar lurks, its solitary menace conveying both real and metaphorical power. Cinematographer Julián Apezteguia excels throughout, but serves up some particularly indelible imagery in the smoke-shrouded finale. ■ ANGUS BATEY

8

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"Outrageously good": Mac DeMarco's set on the final day of the festival

NME GIG OF THE WEEK

Primavera Sound

Parc Del Fòrum, Barcelona

Thursday, May 28 – Saturday, May 30

Mac DeMarco, The Strokes and The Black Keys star at the sun-kissed Spanish bash

PHOTOS BY JENN FIVE

"Where the fuck are you going? Where the *fuck* are you *fucking* going?" Jason Williamson's demented barking stops a departing crowd in its tracks. It's the last night of Barcelona's long-established Primavera Sound festival, and the **Sleaford Mods** frontman and his bandmate Andrew Fearn have just reappeared for an unexpected encore, determined to keep their audience.

Their fans don't take much persuading, surging back towards the band as they fire up '6 Horsemen (The Brixtons)'. The Mods are playing one of the smallest and most picturesque stages at the Parc Del Fòrum, and their foul-mouthed rave-up makes this pretty seaside enclave feel like a Midlands nightclub terrace, with fag-huffing punters bopping to the noise coming from the pissed-looking blokes in front of them. With the

stage lights glinting on the waves, the Nottingham duo's set peaks with the three-pronged attack of 'Tiswas', 'Tied Up In Nottz' and a frothing 'Jobseeker', during which the perspiring Williamson violently scratches the back of his head and mimes masturbating while delivering the line, "*I've been sat around the house wanking*". It's a disgustingly brilliant moment, and proof there's a corner of Primavera's oddly beautiful setting to suit everyone.

Stages are dotted between sky-scraping solar panels and vast concrete walls, with rock-strewn bays in-between. Thursday's opening night is quietest, and wandering between noisy dinnertime shows from **The Thurston Moore Band** and Canadian post-punks **Ought** – who play three untitled new songs – offers an uninterrupted view of the surroundings. As darkness falls, **Jungle** pull an eager crowd to the Ray-Ban Stage, a spectacular amphitheatre with tiered seating that occupies the heart of the site. The Londoners' first festival gig of the year showcases the melodic jerk of 'Time' and 'Busy Earnin'', but their set lacks spark, despite the flashing lights behind them. **James Blake** suffers similarly, maudlin Feist cover 'Limit To Your Love' and 'I Never Learnt To Share' overcoming the peppier likes of 'CMYK'. Headliners **The Black Keys** have no such problem, and their first outing since drummer Pat Carney dislocated his shoulder in January is loud and heavy, which is exactly what the headbangers want.

Roaming around the site as the night creeps to a 6am close, you realise this is where the *soul* of Primavera lurks: after the main headliners have finished, when gabbling, unshackled hordes maraud at will. It's there in the hours after **Run The Jewels** and **Jon Hopkins** close the ATP Stage on Friday. El-P and Killer Mike – whose arm is hoisted in a sling following an injury at SXSW – declare themselves "the best rap group in the motherfucking world" after

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD

Celia Valentine, 27, London
"My highlights were Thee Oh Sees, Caribou and Mac DeMarco, who I'm grinning next to here. Sunrise on Sunday and a bear hug from Mac were pretty sweet too!"

Harriet Addams, 26, London
"Thee Oh Sees were the best – two drummers! I love Primavera because everything gets going after the headliners finish, so you end up watching something unexpected and the night always feels young."

Trevor Stuard, 28, Barcelona
"Jon Hopkins was fantastic. His show is the best mix between music and visual arts you can get at a festival!"

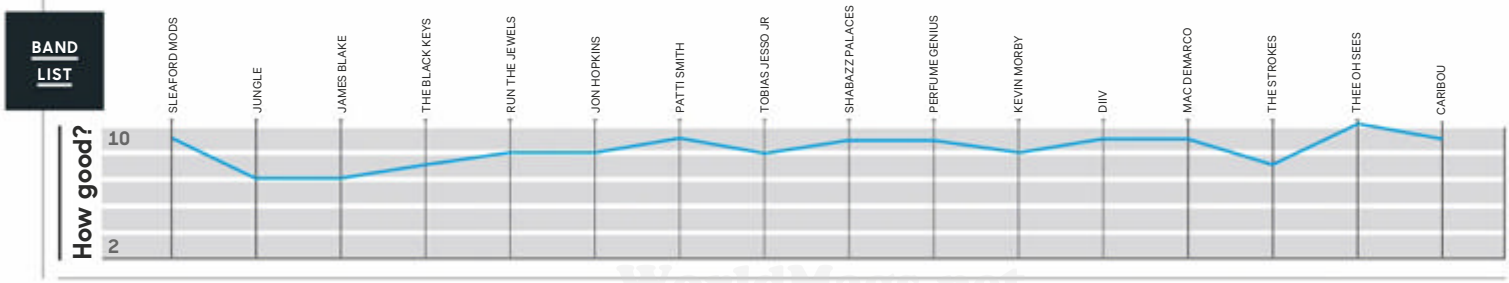
'A Christmas Fucking Miracle'. Hopkins – joined by dancers wielding flashing neon hula-hoops – shakes the ground underneath him with the relentless pound of 'Open Eye Signal', before the crowd invade the grassy banks by the Ray-Ban Stage. There, they roll around, hooting as they tumble down the hill.

Those watching **Patti Smith** earlier are hardly more restrained. Smith walks onstage and screams "C'mon, motherfuckers!" before performing her 40-year-old debut album 'Horses' in full. An electric 'Free Money' has her seething, "*I don't feel bad!*" with more energy than many of her younger counterparts have been able to muster so far. Much quieter and without the support of a band, **Tobias Jesso Jr** guzzles red wine and plinks piano ballads that prompt teary reactions on the Pitchfork Stage, before consecutive sets from

SLEAFORD MODS TRANSPORT US TO A MIDLANDS NIGHTCLUB

a flamboyant **Perfume Genius** and the slinky **Shabazz Palaces** prove two of the weekend's most exciting.

Primavera saves the best 'til last, and its final – and hottest – day starts with former Woods bassist **Kevin Morby** gunning for Kurt Vile's blissed-out crown. **Diiv** are next, unleashing eight seismic new songs – including 'Waste Of Breath' and 'Dust' – that eclipse the indelible melody of 'How Long Have You Known', one of only three old tracks the New York quintet play. **Mac DeMarco**'s Heineken Stage slot is one of the day's biggest draws. Alongside covers of Coldplay's 'Yellow' and 'Over And Done With' by The Proclaimers – both utterly ridiculous – the Canadian busts out hits



Sleaford Mods' Jason Williamson and (below) The Strokes

including 'Blue Boy' and 'Freaking Out The Neighbourhood', but as usual it's his hugely personable crowdsurfing that plonks a cherry atop yet another outrageously good show.

At Atlanta's recent Shaky Knees festival, DeMarco charged onstage to hug **The Strokes**. He doesn't repeat the trick here, leaving the New Yorkers to cruise on near-wordless autopilot through a setlist including a razor-sharp 'Juicebox', played for the first time since 2011. Julian Casablancas' red-and-yellow-streaked mullet and neon Barcelona football shirt – which look just as silly as they sound – might be weird, but these songs sound colossal, particularly a closing 'New York City Cops'.

Yet again it's the small hours that absorb most. **Thee Oh Sees** bring out two drummers for their 2am psych cacophony, before **Caribou** packs out the Ray-Ban Stage. As random foliage bobs in the crowd, Dan Snaith and his band conjure onstage euphoria that matches the sultry, good-time vibes of this festival. After the traditional closing indie-disco from Barcelona's **DJ Coco**, stewards growl into megaphones to herd the droves out as the dreamy Sunday morning sun lights up Primavera 2015 for one last time. ■ BEN HOMEWOOD

9

MORE GIGS

Babes In Toyland
Gorilla, Manchester
Wednesday, May 27

"Hello, Minneapolis!" hollers Babes In Toyland drummer Lori Barbero partway through the reunited punk trio's Manchester gig. It's a joke, although the atmosphere's so celebratory, it could be a hometown show. Feral frontwoman Kat Bjelland described their reunion – after 18 years – as "visceral live therapy", and as she contorts her face into a manic scowl to howl her way through the proto-riot grrl of 'Spit To See The Shine' and 'Bruise Violet', theirs is still the bracing sound of undiluted rage, undimmed by age. Old fans, kids and even a hen party mosh to 'Handsome & Gretel' and come encore 'Dust Cake Boy', Bjelland can barely suppress her grin – the face of someone finally receiving her dues. ■ GARY RYAN

9

Doldrums
The Hope And Ruin, Brighton
Tuesday, May 26

Bringing the UK leg of their European tour to a close, Montreal-based Grimes collaborators Doldrums mix warped pop with intricate, heavy club beats at tonight's free show. Closing his eyes in rapture as drummer Steven Foster kicks in, frontman Airick Woodhead bobs and weaves, rattling a tambourine to the rave blasts of 'HOTFOOT' as his reverb-soaked vocals draw the crowd forward. Woodhead's overloaded electronics can be slippery to pin down on record, but live the trio's banks of rhythms and samples click neatly into focus, their power surging through most strongly on the ecstatic 'My Friend Simjen'. ■ STUART HUGGETT

7

Fleetwood Mac

The O2 Arena, London
Wednesday, May 27

The legendarily dysfunctional gang's epic show feels more like a West End musical than a gig

There's going in all guns blazing and then there's doing what Fleetwood Mac do on the first of six huge shows at London's O2 Arena. They open a 23-song set – which features two encores encouraged by a rabid crowd that includes both Adele and Florence Welch – with their biggest tune. 'The Chain' buzzes into life, an immediate reminder that Fleetwood Mac were – and remain – one of the greatest rock bands of all time.

The giddy feeling in the air is helped along by the presence of a beaming Christine McVie. It might be the 71-year-old's 82nd gig since returning last year after quitting the legendarily dysfunctional gang in 1998, but the reunion of the classic line-up is still a source of joy to crowd and band alike. After her rhythmic 'Rumours' gem 'You Make Loving Fun', she graciously thanks the crowd from behind her keyboard. "You don't get this chance many times in life – I got it twice," she gushes. Her disco-lite 'Everywhere' is even more sublime, and the moment she casually whips out an accordion for a hearty heave through 'Tusk' is impressive in its incongruity.

SETLIST

- ▶The Chain
- ▶You Make Loving Fun
- ▶Dreams
- ▶Second Hand News
- ▶Rhiannon
- ▶Everywhere
- ▶I Know I'm Not Wrong
- ▶Tusk
- ▶Sisters Of The Moon
- ▶Say You Love Me
- ▶Big Love
- ▶Landslide
- ▶Never Going Back Again
- ▶Over My Head
- ▶Gypsy
- ▶Little Lies
- ▶Gold Dust Woman
- ▶I'm So Afraid
- ▶Go Your Own Way
- ▶World Turning
- ▶Don't Stop
- ▶Silver Springs
- ▶Songbird

The five-piece are a cast of endlessly entertaining characters, and at times it's more like being at a flamboyant West End musical than a gig. Stevie Nicks stomps around the stage in Victorian wench gear and velvet platforms, plucking out a cobweb of a cape to drape over her shoulders during 'Rhiannon' and another equally sparkly one for 'Gold Dust Woman'. Lindsey Buckingham is just as ostentatious, playing so hard during 'Big Love' that he ends up bleeding onto his guitar and indulging in some amazingly fancy footwork during 'I Know I'm Not Wrong'. Mick Fleetwood has more than one moment of entertaining madness, though the finest has to be during his unhinged 'World Turning' drum solo, which sees him shrieking in tongues into a mic. Meanwhile, a waistcoated John McVie provides a seamless bass backbone, yet all the while looking like he'd much rather be mooching around a real ale festival in the Cotswolds. Don't ever stop, Fleetwood Mac. ■ LEONIE COOPER

9

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LAURA PALMER

Paul McCartney

Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham
Wednesday, May 27

On an evening calculated to please, the ex-Beatle delivers a joyous 40-song set

Paul McCartney doesn't need to be here. He could be in one of his eight homes, counting piles of money, lounging around and contemplating how he and three mates from Liverpool managed to shape pop music as we know it. But he's not. He's here in the Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, a great big cattle shed that dissolves atmosphere like a Lemsip. And right now he's working his rear quarters off to win back an audience who've been thrown the curveball of his second ever performance of 'Temporary Secretary', a 1980 experiment with Kraftwerk-like synthesizers that's gained great cultural cred with the hipster crowd but not, it appears, his more mainstream fans.

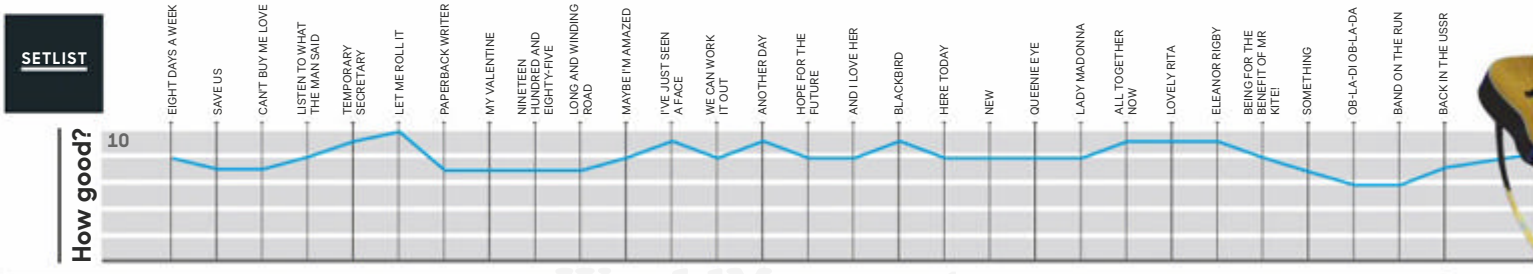
The Maccalytes don't need to worry. 'Temporary Secretary' is merely one of 40 songs the 72-year-old plays tonight in an epic show that lasts for nearly three hours. It takes in early Beatles ('Eight Days A Week', 'And I Love Her'), deep Beatles ('Being For The Benefit Of Mr Kite!', 'I've Just Seen A Face') and big, ballady Beatles ('The Long And Winding Road', 'Let It Be'). There are Wings hits (a beefy 'Let Me Roll It'), tracks from 2013's 'New' (the bouncy title track, he says, will be known to younger audience members as the song from "*Cloudy Meatballs 2*") and even 'Hope For The Future', his epic song for video game *Destiny*). Or, as McCartney has it, "some old songs, some new songs, some between songs – and all that".

TO SEE McCARTNEY LIVE IS TO ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE SWEPT UP IN THE GOOFY BONHOMIE

It's a setlist that has the potential to be a rambling mess, but McCartney paces it cleverly, moving from guitar to piano to psychedelic keyboard, letting the set-up dictate the mood. As a default, his is a standard rock band – including Paul plus bassist Brian Ray, drummer Abe Laboriel Jr and guitarist Rusty Anderson, who if you squint hard enough could just about be George Harrison. They play with the studied perfection proper rock bands don't usually achieve, but there are fragile moments too – midway through the set, McCartney takes to a riser to perform a solo 'Blackbird', and mobile-phone torches twinkle in the crowd. He follows it with 'Here Today', his love song for John Lennon, and proves himself to still be a wily assassin of an audience's heartstrings.

That song imagines Lennon telling his former Beatles compatriot they're "*worlds apart*", and if the prevailing school of thought is that Paul provided the cheese in the Beatles sandwich, to enjoy seeing him live is to allow yourself to be swept up in the goofy bonhomie. He does a celebration dance after playing songs that go down particularly well and reads out fans' signs, including one that says "I stayed celibate for you, Paul". After 'Back In The USSR' he tells a story about playing for Russian dignitaries ("Russkies", as he puts it) as if little-old-him was impressed by *them*, and he bowls about pretending to have been rendered deaf by a firework-filled performance of 'Live And Let Die'.

The end of the main set arrives with a feeling of the inevitable: he chimes out the



opening chords of 'Hey Jude' and the arena rises to its feet. Suddenly you're just one of 12,000 people having a good old sing-song, and you get the kind of tingly, everything's-OK-with-the-world-*really* feeling you'd need the cynicism of Charlie Brooker to resist. McCartney returns with an encore that peals even more from that incomparable back catalogue, including the most mega of all mega-ballads ('Yesterday'), out-there rockers ('Helter Skelter') and a closing number to please the pickiest of Beatles heads – the 'Golden Slumbers'/'Carry That Weight'/'The End' segment from the magisterial closing medley of 'Abbey Road'. There's no mention of his recent work with Kanye or Rihanna, nothing more challenging than 'Temporary Secretary' even, just a chance to adore (us) and be adored (him). It's an evening calculated to please all in attendance, and – you suspect – McCartney himself: daft, cosy, fun, cloying, sure, but would we want it any other way? ■ DAN STUBBS

8

GETTY; ROBERT BLACKHAM

MORE GIGS

Battles
The Dome, London
Wednesday, May 27

Battles' return to Britain after a three-year hiatus is a reminder that beneath the brainy electronics lies a good old-fashioned *rock band*. Almost virtual-sounding on record, live the New York trio are all about force and exertion. The real-time tech-wrangling is so jaw-dropping it makes a crowd of bespectacled chaps in sensible clothing look like kids watching fireworks, and, indeed, everything else about the show is awe-inspiring, from Dave Konopka's weighty bass to Ian Williams' hysterical guitar and John Stanier's colossal drumming. 'Ice Cream' becomes the party-prog equivalent of a killer clown, while 'Atlas' has the crowd moshing violently to what is essentially art rock. Battles won. ■ JOHN CALVERT

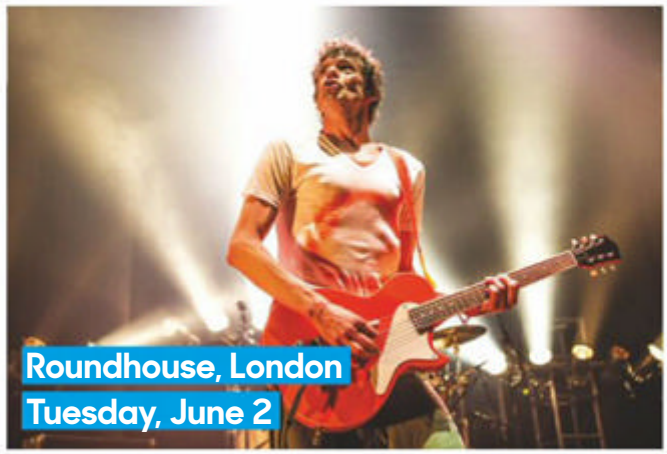
8

Young Fathers
The Haunt, Brighton
Friday, May 29

On a darkened, smoky stage, Young Fathers' touring drummer Steven Morrison beats out a martial rhythm, G Hastings cranks out a siren wail and the band steamroll into the grinding rap of 'No Way'. It's the Edinburgh trio's first British tour since last year's surprise Mercury win for 'Dead', and expectations are high. Yet Hastings, Alloysious Massaquoi and Kayus Bankole surpass them. There's hugely confident craft in the way they cluster around one mic to harmonise over 'Deadline"s nosebleed beats. Waves of dancing greet the rapid final attack of 'Shame', as Bankole hurtles around the stage goading the crowd into gleeful submission. ■ STUART HUGGETT

9

The Replacements



Roundhouse, London
Tuesday, June 2

After 24 years away, the reformed Minneapolis veterans' UK return is out of this world

The Replacements reunion may be coming to a premature end. Recent reports suggest that time spent in the studio working on new material hasn't led to anything deemed release-worthy, and tonight is one of the final dates the Minneapolis quartet – who reformed in 2012 – have confirmed. That frontman Paul Westerberg has been wearing T-shirts throughout their 2015 shows spelling out, one letter per shirt, the message "I have always loved you. Now I must whore my past" (tonight he sports the 'S' in the final word) hints that enthusiasm in the camp is running low.

SETLIST

- ▶Takin' A Ride
- ▶I'm In Trouble
- ▶Favorite Thing
- ▶Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out
- ▶Valentine
- ▶Waitress In The Sky
- ▶Lost Highway
- ▶Kiss Me On The Bus
- ▶Talent Show
- ▶Achin' To Be
- ▶Androgynous
- ▶I Will Dare
- ▶Color Me Impressed
- ▶Dust My Broom
- ▶Merry Go Round
- ▶Wake Up
- ▶I'll Be You
- ▶Maybellene
- ▶Treatment Bound
- ▶Can't Hardly Wait
- ▶Bastards Of Young
- ▶My Boy Lollypop
- ▶Left Of The Dial
- ▶Alex Chilton
- ▶If Only You Were Lonely
- ▶Unsatisfied
- ▶Never Mind
- ▶IOU
- ▶Another Girl, Another Planet

Thankfully, their first UK gig in 24 years isn't just a case of going through the motions. The Replacements' legend is steeped in tales of drunken chaos, and while there's none in their performance here (Westerberg is now teetotal, after all), there's still plenty of the goofy energy that made their past glories sound so exhilarating. After a vicious 'Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out', bassist Tommy Stinson remarks on the venue's former use as an engine shed. "I feel like we're all going to start rotating," he chuckles. Westerberg, at one point, forgets a couple of lines, replacing them with bumbling groans, and before 'Kiss Me On The Bus' he starts to dedicate the song to someone before stepping slightly away from the mic, turning to Stinson and touring drummer Josh Freese and audibly asking, "What the hell are we doing?!"

Soon, though, they hit their stride. 'Achin' To Be' is packed with more fury than on 1989's 'Don't Tell A Soul' album, and 'Androgynous' – whose lyrics about "*unisex evolution*" still feel relevant on the day transgender US TV personality Caitlyn Jenner's *Vanity Fair* cover sparked debate – prompts the night's first big singalong. 'Bastards Of Young' is an air-punching punk epic that segues into a bratty cover of Barbie Gaye's 'My Boy Lollypop'. 'IOU' seems to signal a fiery end to the night, Stinson throwing his bass to the floor and walking offstage, leaving Westerberg gesturing for his return. When he reappears, they bring things to a glorious close with a version of The Only Ones' 'Another Girl, Another Planet' – a fitting finale to an out-of-this-world, and long overdue, return. ■ RHIAN DALY

9

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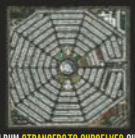

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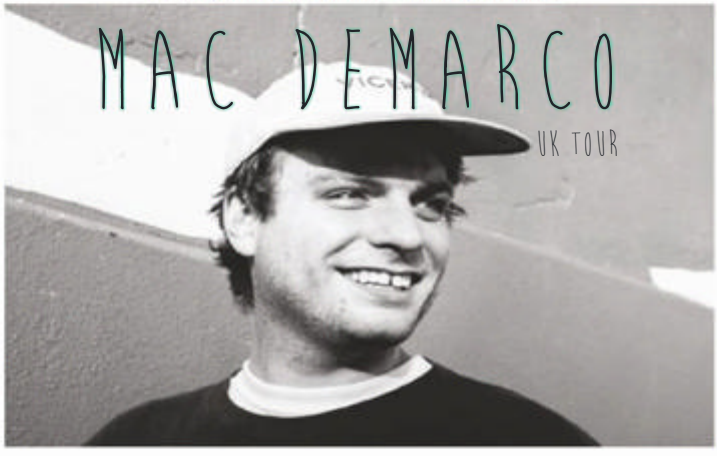

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THIS WEEK IN 1993

Kill or Cure

In a fiery meeting with *NME*, Robert Smith roasts everyone from fellow chart toppers to 'turgid' Suede

The Cure gather on the lawn of the luxury Hook End Manor Studios near Reading to tell *NME*'s Roger Morton about the fire that started when they were here recording 1989's 'Disintegration'. "A heater shorted," says Robert Smith. "It burned everything. We saved my lyrics, crawling along the floor with wet towels round our heads."

In the wake of US Number Two album 'Wish', the now stadium-sized Cure have struggled to come to terms with their success. "It has a hollow ring," Smith says, "because people like Wacko and Michael George sell a lot of records and they're basically shit." He admits to having told Chris De Burgh to "fuck off, you dwarf!", and even rising stars Suede warrant scorn. "Turgid. You just get rid of Morrissey, he moves to America, you wake up in the morning and there's Brett Anderson." It's a level of frankness in contrast to the "obnoxious" early-'80s interviews where he'd "lie and tell stories" because "we'd earned enough money for me to buy enough substances to abuse myself... I took an extraordinary amount of drugs around that time."

BELLYACHING

Tanya Donelly's Belly are under attack, from Riot Grrrls angry at her fairytale imagery and indie sadboys desperate for an audience with her. "I get sad when things like that happen," she tells John Harris. It may be down to the press' portrayal of her as some kind of indie sex kitten. "It pisses me off when people call me cute... that I'm coy. That's a load of bullshit."

SUGAR FM

In an issue backing XFM's bid to gain a broadcasting licence, Sugar's Bob Mould tells Keith Cameron what his personal radio station would play. Citing The Replacements, REM, The Smiths, Carter USM, Discharge, the Sex Pistols, Ramones and Cheap Trick, he declares, "I'd use it to educate people to why music is the way it is now." He also sees himself moderating conversations between musicians, optimistically musing that "to get an hour of great conversation with J Mascis, that could be brilliant".

REVIEWED THIS WEEK

Neil Young – Unplugged

"To say this is the best 'Unplugged' to date is not just to say it's the least bad. It's actually the only one yet to survive the suffocating air of smugness that steeps the whole sorry notion."

■ DANNY FROST

ALSO IN THE ISSUE THIS WEEK

▶Carter The Unstoppable Sex Machine pull out of a tiny EMF support show in Gloucester because they're due to follow a lesbian strip act. They are replaced by The Wurzels.

▶Spiritualized also pull out of a support slot after Depeche Mode fans throw things at them.

▶John Harris catches The Velvet Underground's first ever British gig, concluding: "Tonight The Velvet Underground simply showed us how great they always were and what all those clichés – 'chemistry', 'originality', 'genius' – actually mean."

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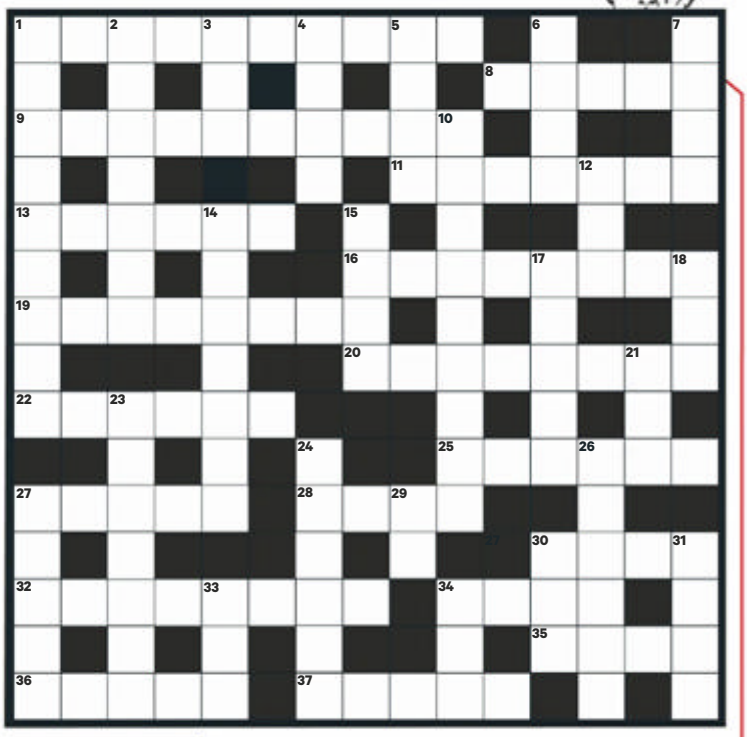


CLUES ACROSS

1 A personal restyle is possible as part of 'The Desired Effect' (1-3-6)
8 For pity's sake, it's Muse (5)
9 Single connection between Coasts and David Bowie (6-4)
11 Realise changes have to be made to 'The Enemy Chorus' band (7)
13 Andy _____, bassist with The Smiths (6)
16 No number in particular from Jay Z (8)
19 Al got Ivy a remix album by Pearl Jam (8)
20 With some alterations, Dizzee Rascal came up with an album (8)
22 Feel sorry about Everything Everything (6)
25 The _____ Brothers had a Number One hit in '60s with 'Cathy's Clown' (6)
27 Klaxons album '____ Of The Near Future' (5)
28 A unique number from Nine Inch Nails (4)
30 Chaotic recording session from Beach House (4)
32+2D Adds no drums in at remix of classic song by Joan Baez (8-3-4)
34 (See 6 down)
35 *"Oh, that boy's a ____, the best you ever had"*, from Arctic Monkeys' 'Fluorescent Adolescent' (4)
36+29D 'I Never Learn' from this Swedish lady (5-2)
37 Requires a word to appear twice in a Cribs album (5)

CLUES DOWN

1 The music just keeps on flowing from out of Dave Grohl (1-2-1-5)
2 (See 32 across)
3 'Keep The ___ Running' for Arcade Fire going on the road (3)
4+5D Everything was personally donated to World Party (3-1-4)
6+34A A genuine sense that this is by Deptford Goth (4-4)
7 (See 34 down)
10 Johnny Marr wasn't paid in hard cash for this recording (4-5)
12+30D The Staves wondering rather like Midge Ure did (2-1-3)
14 Voted Best International Band on four occasions at the NME Awards (7)
15 *"Thank you for the ____, those endless ____, those sacred ____ you gave me"*, The Kinks (4)
17 I'm the wrong sort for Suede (3-2)
18 Hip-hop record label ___ Street featured PM Dawn and Stereo MC's (3)
21 Simple Minds drummer with half a melody (3)
23 Sweet Loretta Martin makes an appearance in this song (3-4)
24 Gripping stuff from Twin Atlantic and Alabama Shakes (4-2)
26 Vini _____, founder of post-punk band The Durutti Column (6)
27 *"She's a _____ and she's looking good"*, Kraftwerk (5)
29 (See 35 across)
30 (See 12 down)
31 God's turn to name a Who number (4)
33 *"Is it getting better, or do you feel the same?"*, 1992 (3)
34+7D A tired look through The War On Drugs (3-4)

MAY 30 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1 Dead Inside, 6+13A The Gift, 9+10A Stuck In My Teeth, 11+12A Into The Groove, 13 Leisure, 16 Dogs, 19+23A Epic Myth, 20 Self Portrait, 22 Tanx, 26 She, 27 Gedge, 28 Konk, 30 DVNO, 32 Stage, 33 Arlo.
DOWN 1 Disciples, 2+29D Adult Net, 3 Icky Thump, 4 Smile, 5 Damaged, 6 Twelve, 7 Echo, 8 Strong, 14 Islet, 15 Europe, 17 Settle, 18+24A Midnight Special, 21 Recover, 23 Mika, 24 Shake, 25 A Go-Go.

Normal NME terms and conditions apply, available at NME.COM/terms. Cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, June 23, 2015, to: Crossword, NME, 8th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Winners will be notified via email.

THINGS WE LIKE

OBJECTS OF DESIRE

DVD
Inherent Vice
Paul Thomas Anderson's trippy and convoluted crime comedy, starring Joaquin Phoenix as a drug-addicted private detective in 1970s LA, is out now on DVD.
▶BUY £10, amazon.co.uk

DVD
The Rolling Stones: Rock Of Ages

This unofficial Australian doc chronicles the Stones' fascinating career, from 1962 to the present day.
▶BUY £7.25, amazon.co.uk

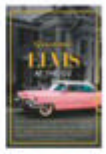
ALBUM
Muse – 'Drones' (Deluxe Edition)

Includes vinyl and CD editions of the record, plus a DVD of live videos of new songs and two litho art prints.
▶BUY £39.99, store.muse.mu

BOOK
Go Set A Watchman by Harper Lee

The sequel to Harper Lee's much-celebrated novel *To Kill A Mockingbird* is published on July 14.
▶BUY £9, amazon.co.uk

EXHIBITION
Elvis At The O2



"The largest Elvis exhibition ever in Europe" showcases artefacts from Graceland at London's O2 Arena.
▶BUY £9–£20, elvisattheo2.com

COVER VERSIONS

▶THIS WEEK'S ARTISTS All We Are

PILOT
www.pilotpen.co.uk

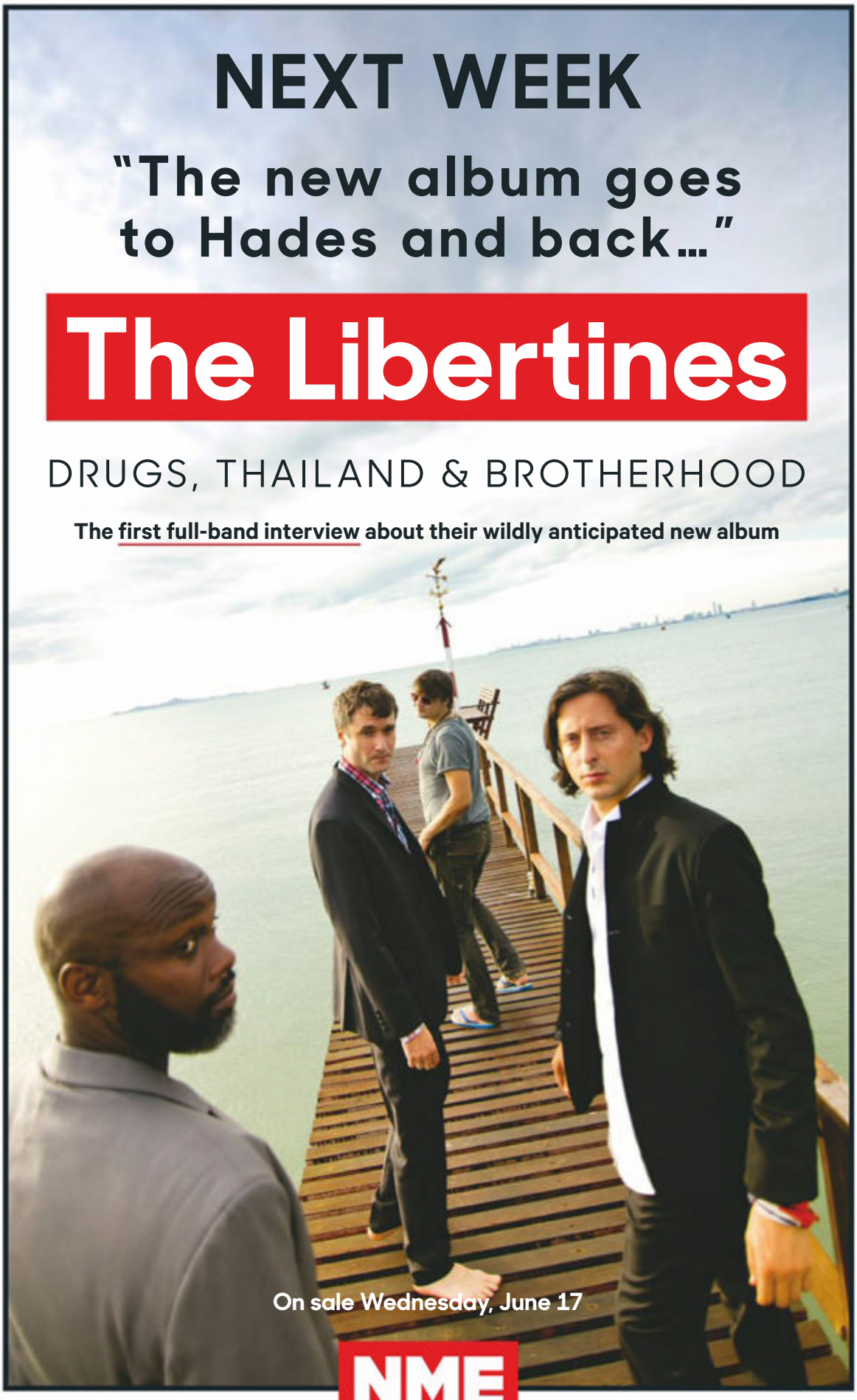
NEXT WEEK

"The new album goes to Hades and back..."

The Libertines

DRUGS, THAILAND & BROTHERHOOD

The first full-band interview about their wildly anticipated new album



ROGER SARGENT

On sale Wednesday, June 17

NME

ALSO IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

INTERVIEWS

- Courteeners
- Diiv
- Tame Impala
- Palma Violets

ALBUM REVIEWS

- Wolf Alice
- Fucked Up
- Bully
- Christopher Owens

CAUGHT LIVE

- Manic Street Preachers
- Savages
- Disclosure
- Jamie xx
- Wu-Tang Clan

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BANDA DO MAR

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CRYSTAL FIGHTERS

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GRAMATIK

JORGE PALMA & SÉRGIO GODINHO

MILKY CHANCE

SBTRKT

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